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Friday
15 Nov. '96

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PRIVATE EYE

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(continued on back cover)



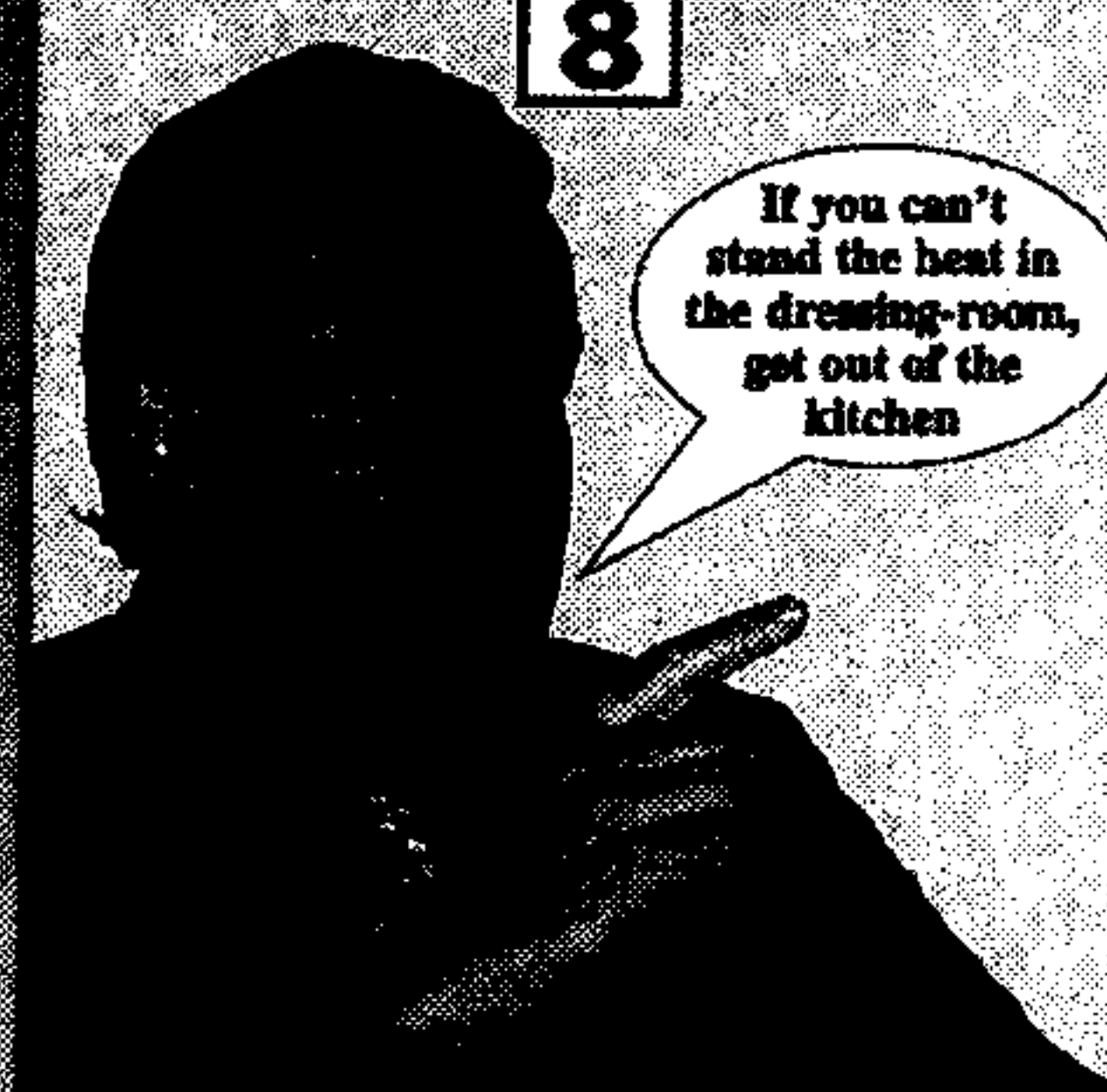
FUNNY OLD WORLD

TALES OF THE BIZARRE FROM THE WORLD'S PRESS
compiled by Victor Lewis-Smith

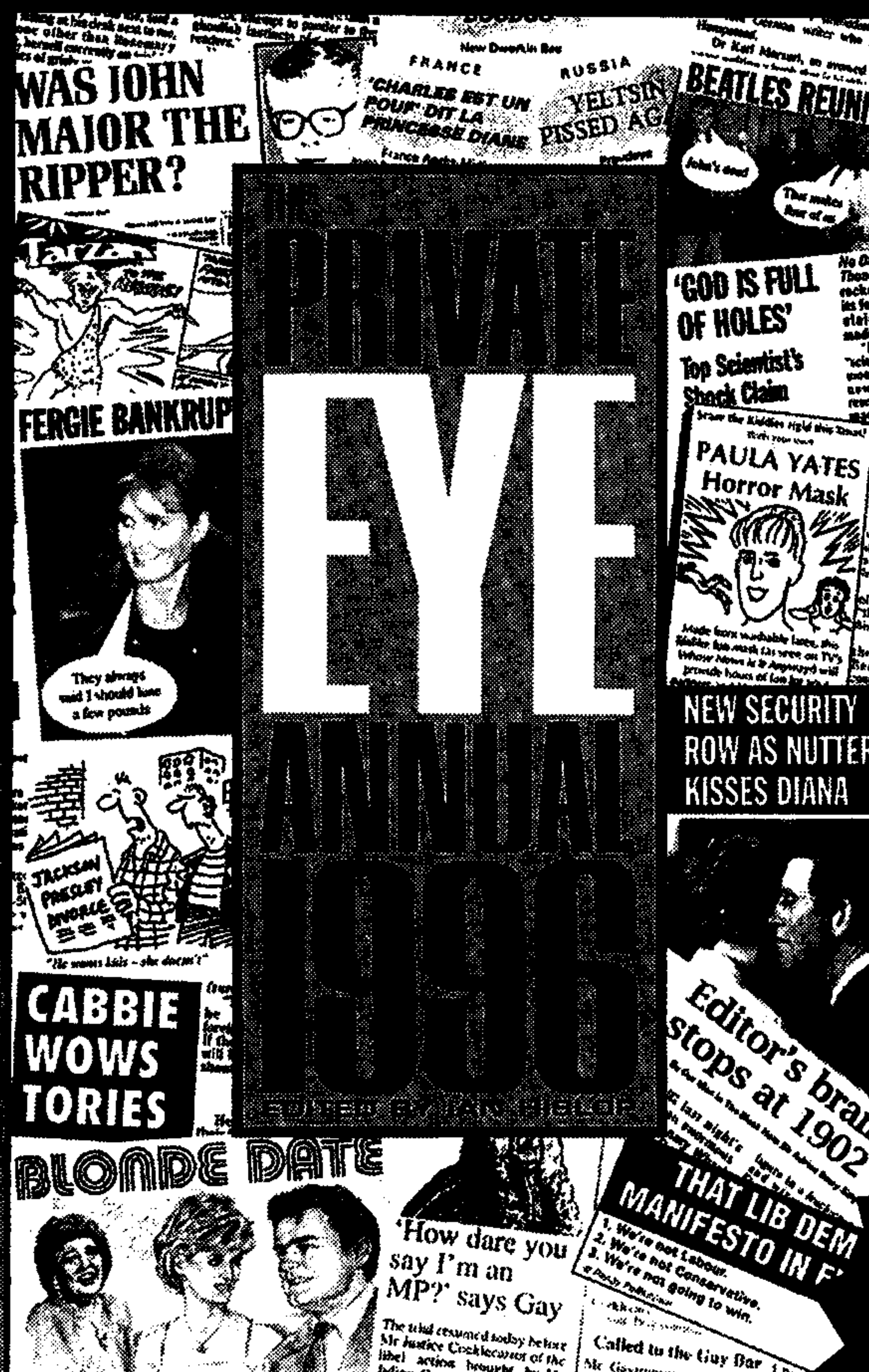
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8



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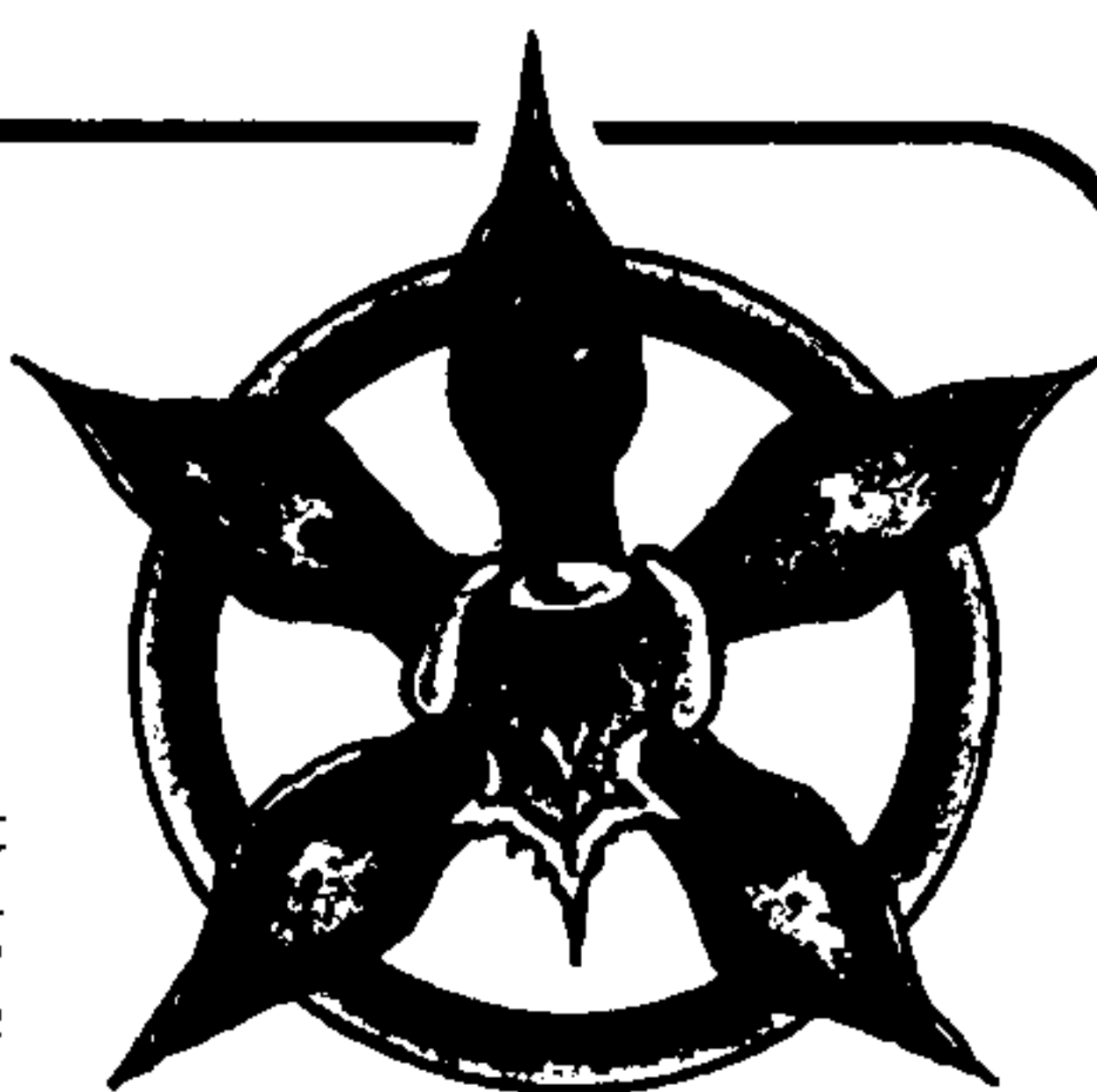


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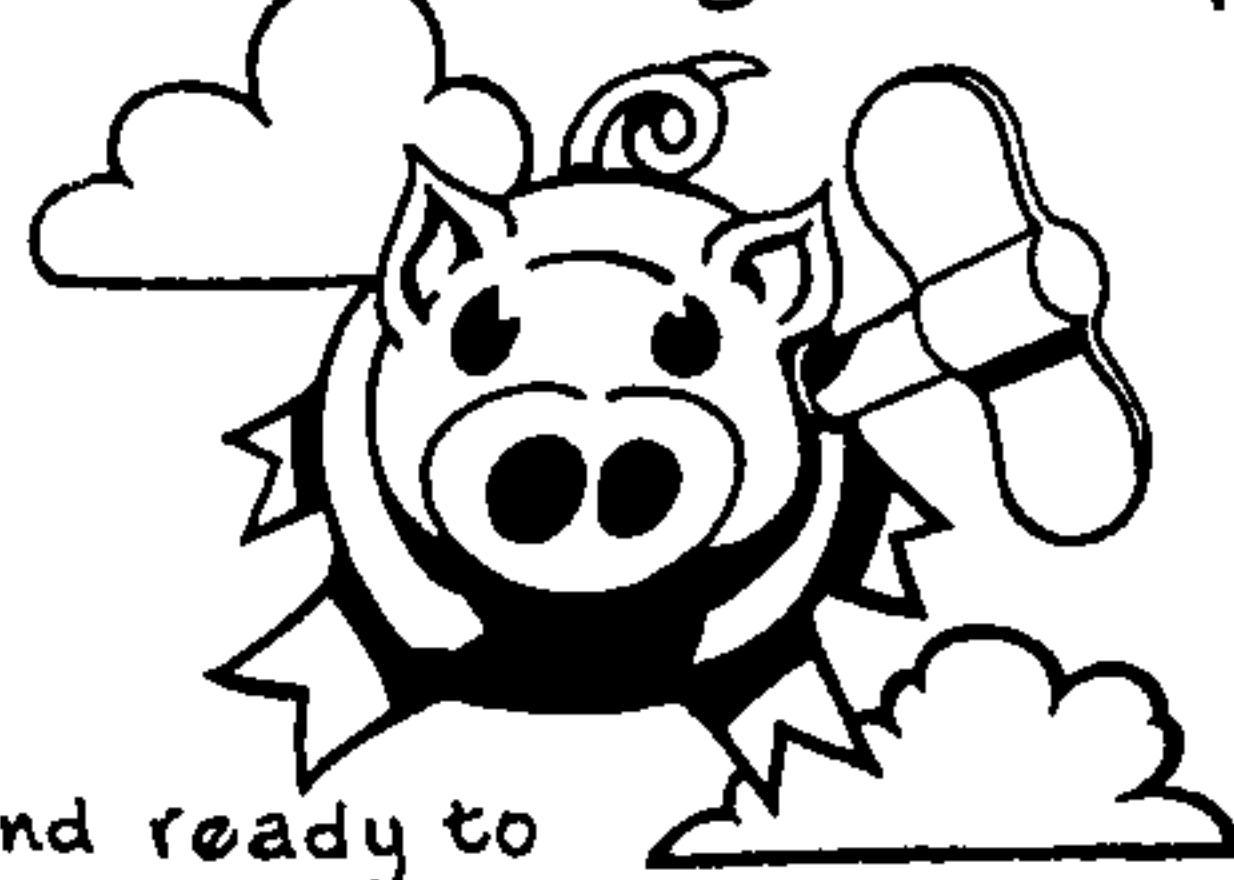
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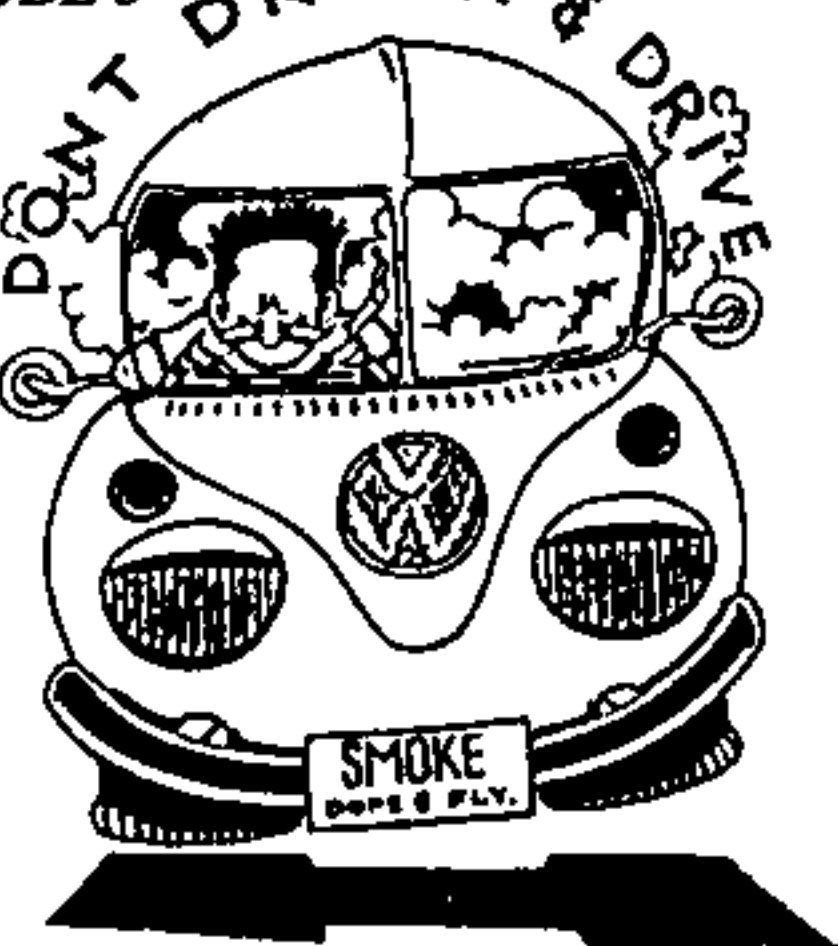


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Gnome

Monday

THERE will be a two-minute silence in the offices of my newspapers while I try to think of a way to cash in on Remembrance Day. The space below represents this silence, and readers are asked to observe it as they contemplate the blank space.

You may now resume your normal activities — ie, reading this article. Suffice to say that the only idea that has occurred to me is to try and link my own circulation war to the other minor wars this century.

As the poet put it: "At the going down of the Sun, and the deterioration of the Mirror, we shall not remember them, as we shall be too busy trying to jump on the bandwagon."

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Gnome's own. See back cover for details
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SIR Gordon Downey's inquiry into parliamentary sleaze got off to a bad start.

Downey wrote a very pompous letter to *Guardian* editor Alan Rusbridger, asking for any relevant documents but warning that any document submitted would be "privileged" and could not be published again without committing a "contempt of parliament".

Rusbridger replied by telling Sir Gordon that if he was going to stick to such a ridiculous rule he could get stuffed and wouldn't see any documents. As the *Eye* went to press, it was stalemate.

QUESTION: What have the following 12 Tory MPs in common? Vivian Bendall, David Congdon, Ian Duncan-Smith, Eric Forth, Sir George Gardiner, Edward Leigh, Angela Rumbold, John Whittingdale, Robert Banks, James Couchman, Bill Cash and Michael Colvin?

Answer: i) They were all taken out to delicious dinners in January and February 1994 by Ian Greer Associates and its client, Philip Morris, the tobacco giant, and were urged to get rid of a private members' bill to ban tobacco advertising. (The bill was talked out.)

ii) They are all admirers of Lady Thatcher, consultant to... Philip Morris.

SO Tim Eggar has now confirmed he is rejoining the oil industry — as the *Eye* repeatedly forecast he would ("oil companies will soon be waving cheque books at him", 3 May).

Eggar tried to dismiss the suggestion by saying he did not know if "rejoin" was the right word, implying that he had not really been an oilman before (he worked for Charterhouse Petroleum!)

He stepped down as energy minister in July and waited for the statutory three Nolan months (plus nine days to make it look better) before taking up his lucrative appointment as UK chairman of the American company M.W. Kellogg. It supplies oil refineries and petrochemical plants — by happy chance an area he dealt with as... energy minister.

He will be part-time until the election. He could have left parliament when he left the government last July and become a fulltime chairman from the start; but that would have meant a by-election in Enfield North where he had slightly less than 10,000 majority and that was judged too dicey.

THE rerun of the arms-for-Iraq scandal — the arms-for-Argentina scandal — includes the inevitable deception of the House of Commons trade and industry select committee.

Until last year, government guidelines insisted on a complete embargo on all military sales to Argentina, including engine spare parts for warships. In a letter to Channel Four's *Dispatches* on 17 October this year, however, the department of trade and industry (DTI) explains that the guidelines were "reinterpreted" to allow Rolls Royce to export spare parts for its engines in Argentine warships. Rolls Royce was told the good news on 2 June last year. Before 2 June 1995, therefore, there was a ban on the spare parts. After 2 June 1995, there wasn't.

The guidelines had been changed, as they had been for exports to Iraq in 1988. As in 1988, no one was told about the change — certainly not the poor old select committee whose deliberations on arms to Argentina continued in earnest ignorance of the

COLOUR SECTION

vital policy "reinterpretation" (about turn).

The select committee's report, published on 12 July 1995 (a month after the "reinterpretation"), blithely asserted: "The Argentinian navy, for example, is still using British equipment but is obviously unable to buy spare parts or replacements for it". The key word was "obviously". "Obviously" Britain couldn't sell the parts under the old policy, but equally obviously Britain could sell them under the new policy — about which no one had told the committee.

Indeed, when Anthony Nelson, then trade minister, responded to the committee's reports for the government in the autumn of 1995, he conveniently forgot to mention that the policy on which an important part of the report was based had been changed. The same secrecy and deceit in changing the guidelines for Iraq, so clearly exposed in the Scott report, was carried over into the policy on sales to Argentina.

Who cares? Does anyone on the select committee care? Does the Labour party care? Does Martin O'Neill, Labour MP for Clackmannan and chairman of the select committee care? His office told the *Eye* that he was "aware of the problem" but has not yet put out any statement about it. He did not see the *Dispatches* programme... because he was in Argentina on a freebie for something called the South Atlantic Council.

PS: The effect of the lifting of the ban on engines and spare parts has been dramatic. The government's Business Monitor shows that in the first seven months of this year British exports to Argentina were £171.2 million, £37.5 million up on the same period last year. The only area where they jumped significantly was in section seven — machinery and transport equipment, where exports were up £35.7 million, almost all the increase. In this section, the biggest jump was in gas turbine engines (up from 0 to £10.1 million); and parts for them (up from £0.8m to £4.7 million).

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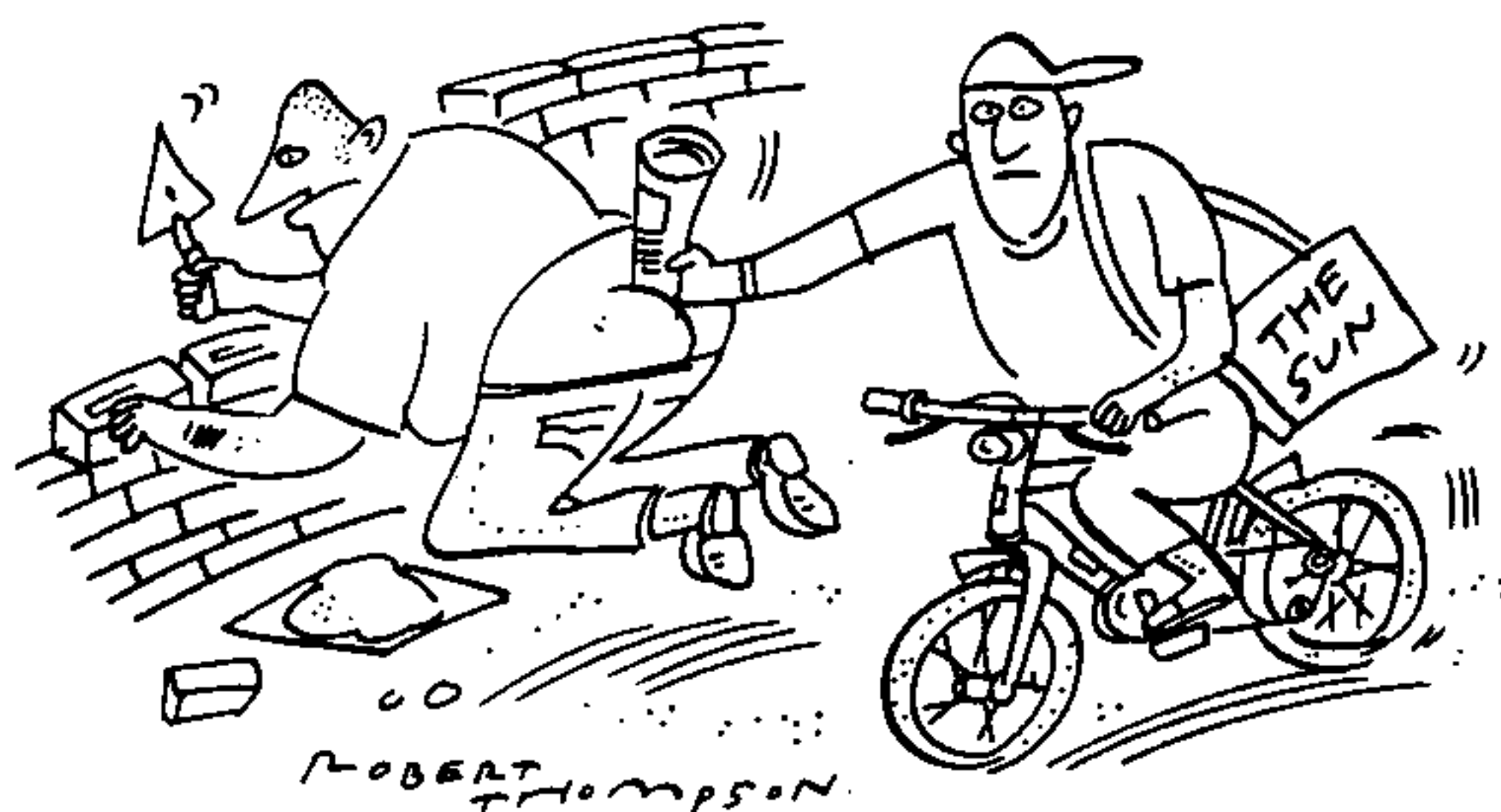
"Move along now — there's nothing to see"

STREET OF SHAME

THE *Sun*'s commitment to improving the nation's morals was proved again last week — after the rag had repeatedly told its readers that falling family values and soaring levels of violence can be blamed on the politicians and TV's low standards.

Eager to back its own moral crusade, the paper launched a campaign to "save *Coronation Street* from its ratings slump — by spicing up the soap with more sex".

Somehow forgetting the pre-watershed status of the soap, the *Sun* interviewed TV "experts" like Dame Barbara Cartland and gameshow host Jim Bowen who all agreed with the *Sun* verdict: "Viewers want more saucy storylines".



THE *Daily Mirror* bravely savaged the England soccer coach's decision to select Paul Gascoigne for the world cup qualifying squad. "Hoddle's insult to every woman", said the righteous editorial, rightly denouncing violence done to women by "louts and drunks".

Shame the rag made no apology for its own loutish cheering of Gascoigne performance on the field (STRIKE BEATER! GAZZA BELTS THREE BEAUTIES AS GOOD TIMES ROLL AGAIN joked its headline). And would the editorial have rung any bells the *Mirror*'s own legendary deputy, Brendon "Chucky" Parsons, who set such a splendid example as assistant editor of the *Sunday Mirror* three years ago (*Eye* 827).

Known then as "Damien", the evil child in *The Omen*, Parsons summoned the paper's art editor Anne Rowe, who replied that she would be with him in a moment. "Damien" then seized the startled hackette by her long blonde hair and dragged her over forcibly to his desk. She fled home in distress, and "Chucky" only avoided a thrashing from her boyfriend by promptly disappearing "on holiday".

"Chucky" continues to dazzle. At the recent beano for Piers "Boy" Morgan's first year "editing" the *Mirror*, his deputy made an arse-licking 20-minute speech, with one barb: "That 'Achtung Surrender' headline," chortled "Chucky", with characteristic wit, "was a great success."

Morgan tells anyone who will listen that he had been hit by a cricket ball at a weekend match and was in bed at the time of the notorious anti-Hun debacle.

THE *Financial Times*, once a serious newspaper, now seems hell-bent on competing with the *Sun* at the comic-cuts end of the market. Under the new managing director, Stephen "Slasher" Hill, editorial numbers have been cut by 40 since April — and it shows.

Last week the paper made itself a laughing stock by running an important political story about Tony Blair's new haircut. But less attention was paid to an even more embarrassing howler a few days earlier, when a front-page splash about Lonrho claimed that Tiny Rowland "was once judged by a British government investigation panel unfit to preside over a public company". The paper was obliged to run a grovelling front-page apology the very next day.

Are there really no sub-editors left at the *FT* who remember that it was Cap'n Bob, not Tiny Rowland, who was on the receiving end of the DIT's famous damnation? Er, no: they've all been sacked.

HACKS at the *Scotsman* and *Scotland on Sunday* are still in a state of shock at the arrival of Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill as their editor-in-chief.

Even more shocked are senior executives, who have been rushing to abase themselves before the all-powerful Brillo Pad. On 19 October, before the editor-in-chief was appointed, deputy editor Alan Taylor wrote a profile of Neill which observed that he "ruled his staff with a mixture of fear, abuse and humiliation... Charles Moore calls him 'ghastly', and says he only has to see him to start laughing." Ten days later, with Neill installed, the desperately ambitious Taylor performed a nimble U-turn, penning an arslighan piece about his "feisty, provocative and stimulating" new boss.

Taylor is now hotly tipped to become the next editor of the *Scotsman*.

ON THE day of Andrew Neill's appointment as chief hatchetman at the *Scotsman*, the news was duly mentioned along with the other main stories on *Radio Scotland*'s 6.30pm edition of *Reporting Scotland*.

But non-*Eye* readers may have been puzzled by the newsreader's reference to the return of the prodigal son as "Old Brillo Pad is back". Thankfully, this disgraceful slur on a distinguished media figure was dropped from all subsequent bulletins.

QUEUES of cars stretched round and round Le Shuttle's Folkestone holding area as irate travellers waited up to five hours to board the supposedly speedy train. What was the cause of the jam?

Step forward... the *Sun*, which was offering readers a ticket on Le Shuttle for £1. This gimmick came close to the Hoover free flights fiasco as thousands took up the tabloid's offer on the same day.

SHAMEFACED marketing wallahs at the *Daily Telegraph* are drowning in a torrent of furious letters from disappointed garden lovers.

In a promotion in March with the British Association of Landscape Industries (BALI), the paper offered readers who collected enough tokens a free half-hour consultation about their gardens with a BALI member. Now, after months of waiting for the landscape expert to call, readers have been informed that "BALI's failure to honour its obligations is infuriating for both you and us at the *Telegraph*." The newspaper offers an unnamed book on gardening and a packet of seeds by way of compensation.

Some observers predict that this could be the biggest fiasco since the notorious "Hoover tickets" disaster. One trusts that trading standards officers and the Advertising Standards Authority are on standby.

RATHER late in the day, the *Times* is investigating its chief sports reporter, David Miller, who is employed to write for the paper about the Olympic Games while also collecting a useful side-income from the International Olympic Committee.

Following our recent Hackwatch on Miller (*Eye* 908), an indignant reader wrote to the *Times* to ask why Miller had not been reprimanded for his blatant conflicts of interest. Managing editor James MacManus fobbed him off on 15 October with a non-committal reply.

Unimpressed by this, the reader wrote back asking for a "non-politician's answer" which dealt with the specific allegations against Miller.

Lo and behold, the Thunderer suddenly changed its tune. "I am sure you understand the allegations in *Private Eye* are the subject of detailed inquiries by my office," MacManus wrote on 24 October.

Watch this space.

MYSTIC MOGG

"Colin Powell is a black Eisenhower. Like Eisenhower in 1951 he will defer announcing his candidature for the presidency until his chosen moment; like Eisenhower, he will win the Republican nomination... like Eisenhower, he will be elected by a large majority in 1996."

— William Rees-Mogg, the *Times*, September 1995.



STORIES FROM HARRODS

CHESTER STERN, accident-prone crime correspondent of the *Mail on Sunday*, has suffered yet another humiliation.

"Police are investigating claims that an editor of the upmarket magazine *Vanity Fair* tried to buy tapes he thought were stolen in a bid to defend a libel action from Mohammed Al-Fayed," he reported on 27 October. Alas! Last Sunday the paper printed a correction, admitting that the editor in question — Henry Porter, *Vanity Fair*'s London chief — had never tried to do anything of the kind.

Quite the opposite, in fact. Porter, who is masterminding the magazine's defence of a mega-libel suit brought by the mendacious Egyptian tycoon, was approached by one Paul Handley-Greaves, Fayed's former head of security. Handley-Greaves claimed that he had been sacked from Harrods and wanted to get even with his old boss. During a meeting with Porter at an East London health club, he made all sorts of wild accusations about Fayed, and promised to provide audio and video tapes by way of proof — if *Vanity Fair* was willing to pay.

Porter immediately suspected that he was being set up. He strongly advised that the mag should have nothing to do with this dodgy new witness.

Just as well. As the *New York Post* reported last week, the whole operation was indeed a sting organised by Fayed in the hope of discrediting *Vanity Fair*. Nevertheless, Chester Stern went ahead and wrote his story alleging that Porter had offered £5,000 for the tapes — thus proving himself rather more gullible than the *Vanity Fair* man he was "exposing".

With almost a year to go until the libel case comes to court, we can expect plenty more attempts at sabotage and disinformation by the Fayed camp, all of which will no doubt be obediently chronicled in the ever-helpful *Mail on Sunday* — whose star columnist, Stewart Steven, just happens to be a salaried employee of... Mohamed Al-Fayed.

Meanwhile, Fayed is now polishing his saintly halo by dishing out £200,000 to a "Christian Democrat" outfit run by David Alton MP, who wants to promote higher moral standards in public life. Fayed, who has boasted of trying to "buy up" MPs, is obviously just the chap to finance such a noble venture. As his spokesman explains, "he believes the morality of the Muslim, Jewish and Christian faiths should underpin the law."

Presumably this includes the ninth Christian commandment, "Thou shalt not bear false witness". But before David Alton gets too carried away by his generous new benefactor, he should study the 1990 report by department of trade inspectors on the Fayed takeover of Harrods. "As month after month of our investigation went by," they concluded, "we uncovered more and more cases where the Fayed were telling lies... They repeatedly lied to us about their family background, their early business life and their wealth... As a result of what happened, the lies of Mohamed Fayed and his success in 'gagging' the press created [a] new fact: that lies were the truth and that the truth was a lie."

Fayed is also not quite up-to-speed on the biblical injunction to "love thy neighbour as thyself". In seven months during 1994-95, Harrods lost no fewer than 25 cases at industrial tribunals brought by people who claimed they had been illegally sacked or discriminated against on racial grounds. Still, as the Bible reminds us, there is more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner that repenteth...

REGULATORS

THE utility regulators, who are always telling other people to cut costs by being more efficient, have changed tack and are sanctioning a splurge in spending — on themselves.

Leading the way is electricity regulator Stephen Littlechild, who is to spend 41 per cent more than his budget.

Littlechild's Offer normally issues bulletins like confetti, but there has been no official announcement of the expansion. Instead, the news was hidden in a written reply on a Friday to an arranged question in the Commons — the trick used when a government department is embarrassed about inconvenient information.

Buried in a list of future cash limits and costs were also details of increases of 26 percent for Ofgas, the gas regulator, and 11 percent for Oftel (telephones). Ofwat (water), meanwhile, is going more than £400,000 over budget.

The regulators have all been imposing cuts in prices in their sectors in the last few months. This has been welcome to the government in the run-up to an election, as the *Eye* noted on 23 August. But it is of course purely a coincidence that, with the "independent" regulators doing things the government likes, the government does things the regulators like.

NUKE NEWS

THE worst fears of workers and observers at Scotland's nuclear reprocessing and waste plants in Dounreay — where a private management team was brought in by the UK Atomic Energy Authority — have been confirmed.

Evidence of falling safety standards "leaked" out after the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (NII), which has been watching Dounreay carefully since the private team arrived, had a fraught meeting with Mr Bob Mathews, Dounreay's new manager.

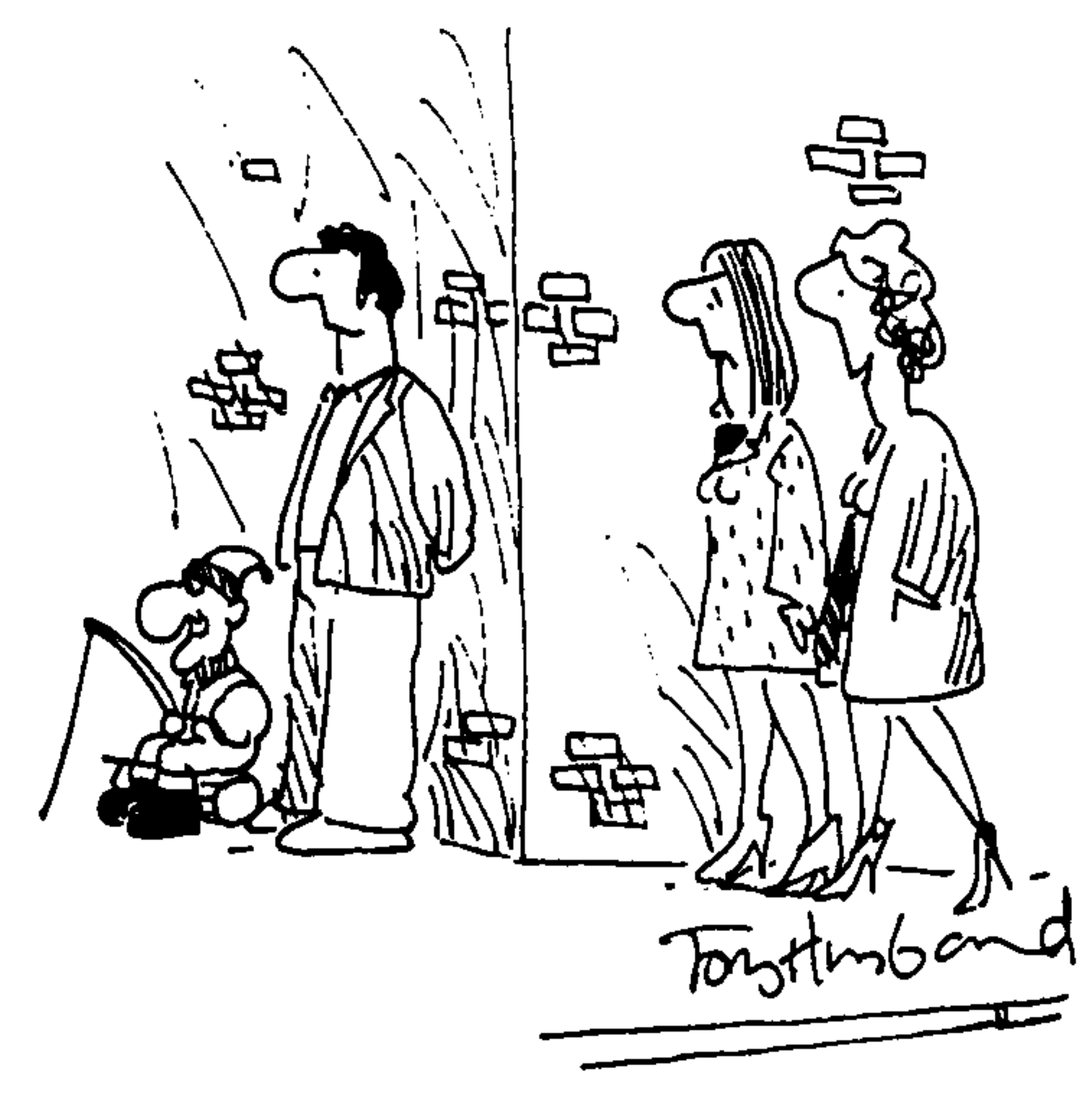
NII officials warned Mathews they would seek criminal prosecution if any more workers were contaminated as a result of management flaws.

The NII was also concerned by an exemption clause secured by the UK Atomic Energy Authority under which small contractors who cannot afford their own health and safety teams are given access to AEA Technology, the newly privatised firm which has checked radiation hazards at Dounreay since it opened. This clause means that the same firm which provides radiological protection and advice to contractors is also monitoring that protection on behalf of the customer.

Mafia missing

FORMER Mafia member Art Blajos has called off a visit to Hammicks in Peterborough to promote his book Blood In Blood Out, due to a death in the family.

Peterborough & Oundle Herald & Post



"Oh, stop worrying. He said he'd bring his best friend and he will..."

HALLO!

THE HEARTWARMING COLUMN



HALLO! CALAMITY in the cabinet room, where some horrid prankster has shown contempt for the prime minister by leaving an unwrapped condom on his chair. With all the "splits", you'd have thought cabinet meetings were uncomfortable enough for him already!

A Downing Street lackey reassures the Marquesa the culprit was not a member of government: most likely it was one of Whitehall watcher Professor Peter Hennessy's students from Queen Mary and Westfield College, who had been granted a tour of the inner sanctum of government.

When Prof Hennessy was told he was furious that one of his contacts in the corridors of power had been jeopardised. He launched an investigation to find the guilty party — and as a former *Times* hack turned academic, his methodology was suitably foot-in-the-door: he barged into a colleague's lecture and denounced the entire year in highly unacademic language.

Students? Don'tcha just love 'em!?

HALLO! WHEN nice Mr Blair moves into Downing Street, his first job will be to find a something to do for our dear mutual friend Ben Pimlott, biographer of the queen, "new" Labour grandee and, as the *Guardian* calls him, one of the foremost left-wing intellectuals of the age — a man whose socialism is "inclusive, not sectarian" and who also happens to live near Mr Blair.

The Grauniad's eulogy is not entirely accurate when it says Prof Pimlott and his wife have "always managed to find good state schools (in Bloomsbury and Covent Garden) for their three sons". Two of the young Pimlotts have received their education at Westminster, one of the most expensive private establishments in the land. But its old boys do include such socialist stalwarts as Tony Benn — so I suppose it will count as an honorary state school under "new" Labour.

HALLO! TO dear, dishy Andrew Neill's "happening" book launch, where I am thrilled to see "Brillo" has a new BF — none other than "Maj" James Hewitt!

Rather rum, though. For after Brillo left the *Sunset Times* he pursued Princess Diana's disgraced ex-paramour relentlessly with the aim of interviewing him for *Vanity Fair*. He showered the former cavalry officer with begging letters ("We're both renegades, etc...")

While Hewitt may be moronic (he nearly accepted an invite to go on Clive Anderson's TV show, boasting to friends, "I've got all the answers"), he still had enough sense to resist Brillo.

Till now. What fun! What a pair!

HALLO! TO THE Marriott Hotel, Grosvenor Square, to hear Lord Donoughue, that other glittering star in the "new" Labour's millionaire-friendly firmament, address city fat cats and PR men on: "Doing Business With Labour".

Curiously, His Lordship remarked that he had been "fired by Maxwell".

How nasty of Mr Tom Bower, then, in his recent BBC programme Maxwell — *The Downfall* to say: "Another person who could have warned of Maxwell's operations was Lord Donoughue. When he resigned he took £50,000 in return for keeping silent."

What a disgraceful suggestion.

HALLO! FERGIE's friend Dr Allan Starkie, now her Boswell (Yorkie: *My Part in her Downfall*), obviously has a very soft spot for red-heads.

The Marquesa was touched to witness this idiosyncrasy while waiting to have her own hair permed at Panache, the chic basement salon of the Meridian Hotel, Piccadilly. Suddenly Starkie arrived, propelling a tall young German blonde before him.

Starkie was in a frightful hurry, announcing he was late for an appointment with the Albanian ambassador. Yet he gave Panache's crimpers very strict instructions regarding the dying of this gel's hair: it was to be RED. Er, what shade, sir? The "Dr" did not hesitate: "Like the Duchess of York!"

HALLO! PEOPLE often ask me what Dr Allan Starkie is a "Dr" of, and one confesses one is baffled by his visiting card, with the initials "DBA, Dipl. Ing." (plus addresses in Frankfurt, Berlin, London, etc, etc). His publishers, Michael O'Mara Books, say: "Er... a Doctor of Business Administration".

Starkie is a sweetie, if a bit worried by how short he is, wearing very fetching stacked-heels. He has also very kindly omitted the name of the ex-boyfriend who made the Duchess wait in the corridor while he romped with other gels: ie, fiftysomething Verbier-based entrepreneur, Paddy McNally.

So, for the Marquesa, "Dr" Starkie will always have only one title: Doctor of Hearts!

NEXT FOUR DAYS: Northern and western parts of the region are expected to be rather wet and quite windy. However, the south and east more settled and a little brighter. Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

Manchester Evening News



"...Express yourself, hey hey hey hey..."

HALLO! GUESS who's coming to dinner at a charity do in Birmingham in the new year — none other than Kevin Maxwell, the much misunderstood businessman!

Kevin will be speaking to younger members of the Institute of Directors, who tell me enthusiastically: "Family bereavement, bankruptcy and criminal charges have not stopped Kevin Maxwell fighting for his personal and business life. Having had a greater exposure to life's tribulations than most, Kevin Maxwell's life experiences will be of interest to us all." How true!

Cap'n Bob's son will talk on "Winning in the Face of Adversity" — which will be followed by a presentation from Mirror pensioners called "Losing in the face of adversity". Er, not.

'The Marquesa'



IN THE TEAROOM

THE boys and girls on Labour's frontbench have been perfect little goody-goodies. They've kept their noses clean, their socks up — and they haven't made a single spending commitment in any media interviews.

All the while, of course, they have been dreaming of what fun they'll have with all the shiny new sixpences they'll get after the election. And the other day the excitement got too much to bear and a group of them tugged at the shadow chancellor's trousers demanding just the weeniest hint of how much their pocket money will be.

The dour Scot duly led them across the road to where his aide, Ed Balls, keeps in his laptop a program that shows at what thresholds of spending the markets panic and cause a run on the pound or force interest rates up. It showed that none of them could afford much more than a Mars bar and a couple of penny chews. Gloom all round.

"But what about all the extra dosh released when we get the unemployed off benefit?" asked young Harriet Harman. More clicks and whirs produced a table showing the level of economic growth needed to sort out unemployment (4 percent per annum) plotted against what growth is likely to be (3 percent max). More gloom all round.

"But what if we don't go into the single currency," asked John Prescott, "we'll be able to borrow more, won't we?" Alas, explained a mournful Brown, the wily Europeans have invented something called "reinforced convergence programmes" for non joiners. So, no we can't. Tears all round.

But John Prescott went to see his teacher — Lord Mehnad Desai of the London School of Economics. Had the shadow chancellor got his sums right? Er... yes, he had. "So what you're saying is that if we don't put up taxes — which is against school rules — all a Labour government could do is keep doing what the Tories have been doing for the past four years?"

"Take two gold stars and a merit point," replied the economic guru.

'Urquhart'

CURSE OF MAJOR

JOHN MAJOR's compliments to a company called **Plus Two Displays** have proved fatal.

No sooner had he praised its outstanding achievements in a competitive market than the company went bust with debts of more than a quarter of a million pounds.

The Curse of Major went further, however: Creations, a small business hired by Plus Two to produce 15,000 newsletters, lost £6,000 when its client could not pay up. The newsletter, incidentally, contained the prime minister's praise of Plus Two and carried on the front a photograph of... John Major. Small businesses, be warned!

MARTIN REDMOND, Labour MP for Don Valley, has an embarrassing habit of asking ministers questions about stories he reads in the *Eye*.

So when *Eye* 895 revealed earlier this year that Christopher Tye, head of the business branch of the lord chancellor's department (where he did policy work on the privatisation of collecting parking fines) had become consultant to Drakes Group, bailiffs who collect parking fines, Mr Redmond put down a written Commons question to the lord chancellor wondering if this might be a case of conflict of interest.

Jonathan Evans, then junior minister in the lord chancellor's department, replied brusquely that Mr Tye had "no dealings" with Drakes while a civil servant. Whoops! Months later, on 14 October, Evans's successor Gary Streeter has written to the Labour MP to say this information "is not correct". In fact Tye had "two contacts" with Drakes and had attended a meeting between Drakes and the lord chancellor's department. So impressive was Tye's presence at the meeting that Drakes promptly addressed a letter to him setting out its demands.

Wrote Mr Streeter: "Tye says that he simply forgot these minor contacts when asked." No problem, however. Although Tye's new appointment broke the rules governing top civil servants' jobs with firms they have been dealing with, "these breaches," Mr Streeter insisted, "were only technical". So there was no need to do anything about them, naturally.

EDWINA CURRIE, Tory MP for Derbyshire South and enemy of the egg establishment, has also had trouble with neighbours at her new flat in Clapham South.

Edwina responded frostily when a resident in her building asked to swap parking places. She fired back a tart note replying that she had the superior space because she had the more expensive flat. When her neighbour discovered in the lease that the space was actually his, she did not move her car for several days.

The brave man eventually took matters into his own hands and put his car into her space when she was out. When Edwina saw what he had done she leapt on to his patio, rapped on his bedroom window and demanded that he "Move from my space!" Once it had been pointed out again that the space was legally his, Currie eventually conceded and moved her car.

Next, Currie became inflamed when she saw that the same resident had put his washing out on the patio — the same patio which adjoined the car park where she parked her car. The resident's son was then astonished to see La Currie leap the flower bed once more and pin a note on his washing. "Do take your washing indoors, you make the place look like a Glasgow tenement! And you're breaking your lease, too. Another resident."

The entire block now waits with bated breath for the next round in Currie's campaign of good neighbourliness.

MYSTERY surrounds the future marital status of "Dr" Julian Lewis, the shadowy deputy director of "research" at Tory central office.

Lewis, who has specialised in the black art of political campaigning, was recently chosen as the Tory candidate for the new and very safe seat of New Forest East.

During interviews he was accompanied by a

young lady of apparently impeccable pedigree who was introduced as his fiancée. The blue rinses of the New Forest were suitably impressed, and Lewis was selected for the coveted seat: current majority 20,405.

Party activists then expected to see the woman on Lewis's arm — or at least by his side — during visits to the constituency. But she was always strangely absent. When a senior officer asked Lewis: "Where is your fiancée, Julian?" he replied: "Oh, that was just for the selection meeting."

Whatever can it mean?

This has been recognised by the British Olympic Association who rejected it twice as national candidate for the games — and constipation in the capital is worse than ever.

Evening Mail

SCOTTISH secretary Michael Forsyth doesn't hesitate to spend Scottish office (ie taxpayers') money on causes that, coincidentally, benefit the Tory party in Scotland.

First he gave a job to Tory party press officer Jacqui Low, who is now a paid-up Scottish office official. Next, he was upbraided by the cabinet secretary for using Conservative slogans in Scottish office press releases; and then he used government economists to answer a CBI questionnaire which was addressed to him as head of the Scottish Conservatives.

All this from a self-confessed Thatcherite who is concerned about the use of taxpayers' money!

Forsyth's latest wheeze is *Government Expenditure and Revenue in Scotland*, a beautifully produced booklet outlining how Scotland is subsidised to the tune of £8 billion. Surprisingly, this piece of propaganda — which ties in neatly with the Tories' arguments — is free to the public, unlike most other government publications which they have to buy.

OLD LABOUR NEWS

ARTHUR SCARGILL's Socialist Labour Party continues to keep spirited political debate alive in south London.

Tony Goss, former Southwark councillor best known for the allegations of corruption and violence which got him expelled by the Labour NEC in 1988, has been up to his old antics in his new post as south London branch chair.

First he disrupted a debate by swearing and abusing those present after refusing to accept a majority decision (*Eye* 909). At the next branch meeting Goss was removed as chair by 21 votes to six and was forced to apologise for his behaviour.

Local comrades will not now be overjoyed to learn that Scargill's party has selected Goss to oversee all election work in London in the run up to the general election.

QUANGO NEWS

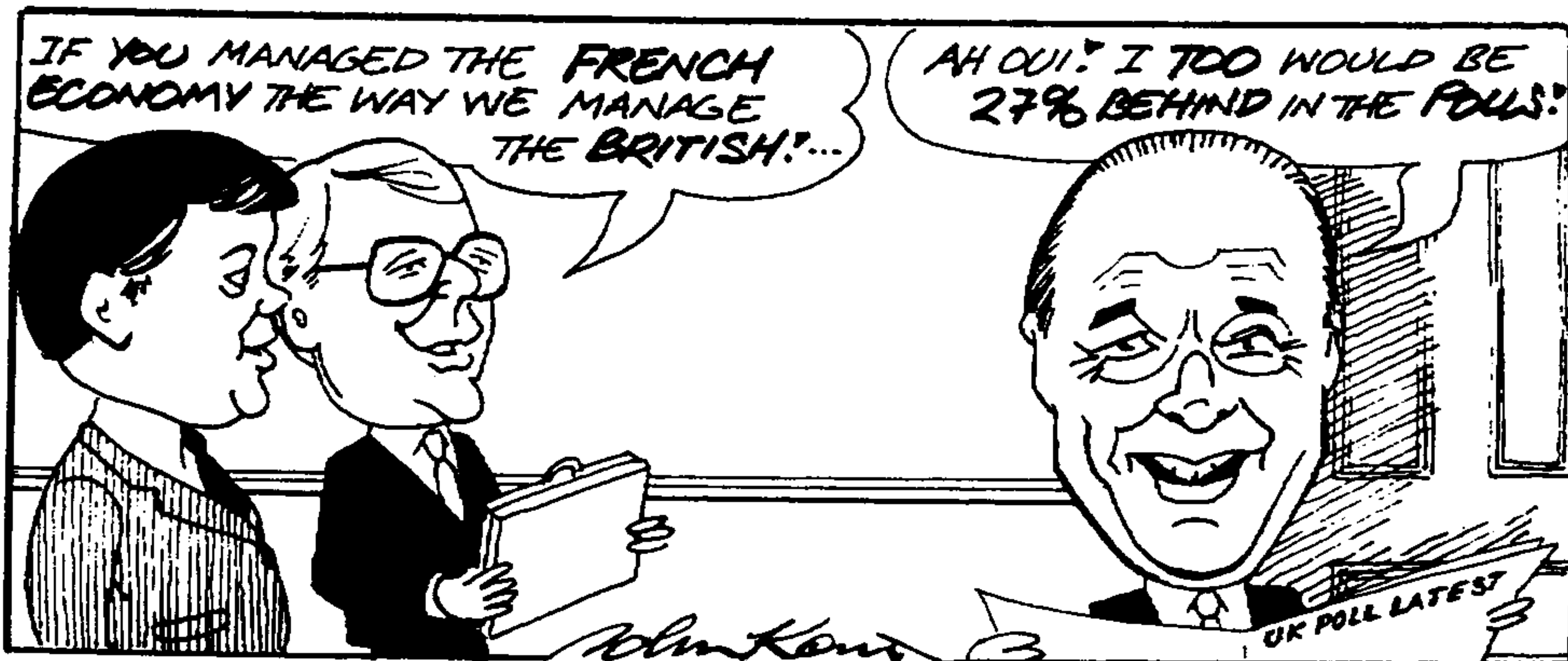
A CURIOUS organisation called the British Telecom Scottish Advisory Forum has been unearthed by tax inspectors in Scotland.

They had been inquiring about payments to local worthies which had not been taxed by the telecommunications company. BT, which explained that it was not its duty to tax the payments, described the forum as a "sounding board in Scotland for BT so that the company can judge community perceptions".

All forum members are paid £3,000 a year and £500 for each of the four meetings they attend each year. These lucky judges of "community perception" include Edith Rifkind, wife of foreign secretary Malcolm; Sir John Shaw, the deputy governor of the Bank of England; and David Smith, the chief executive of Dunfermline Building Society.

Former members include Scotland's most infamous quango king, Mr Fraser Morrison. Of course these dignitaries' widespread influence in government and finance is coincidental: BT is only interested in tapping their immense knowledge of locals' concerns.

'Backbiter'



Inland Revenue

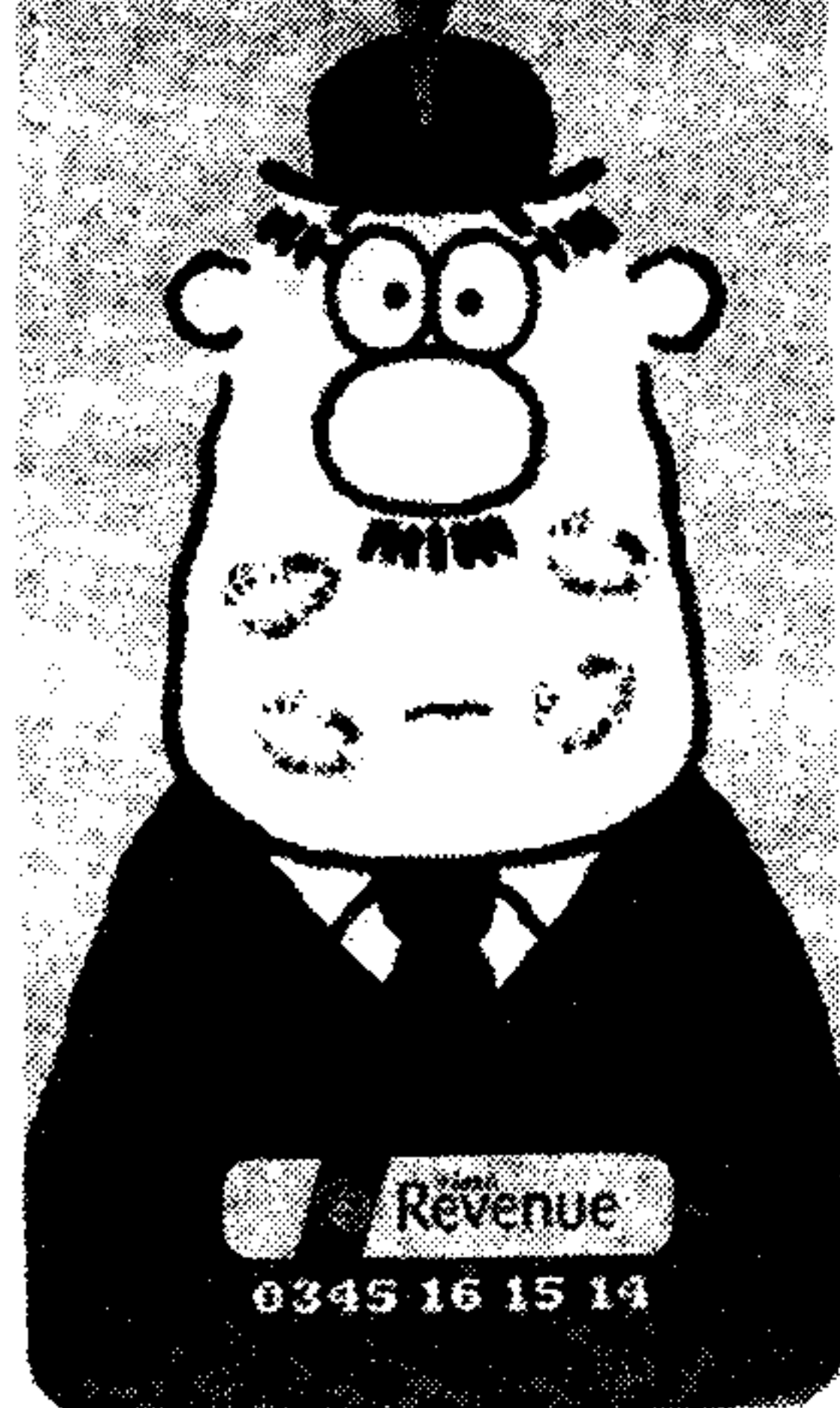
EDS, the giant information technology firm (*Eyes passim*) which has won a large number of massive government contracts including that of the Child Support Agency (*see cock-ups passim*), is still having problems fulfilling its obligations to the Inland Revenue.

EDS was hired to introduce self-assessment, an enormous change in the method of taxation, and it has been making its staff work incredible amounts of overtime to try to finish the project. It is now running over budget by a cool £263 million and the whole system is in danger of crashing every time more than a few staff per tax office log on to it.

Revenue records were also supposed to stay in the UK to ensure the confidentiality of citizen's tax histories. It has now emerged that this policy has been changed. According to the Revenue, "diagnostic and remedial work" will sometimes go "to Oracle facilities abroad". Oracle is the company which supplies the software package for the tax database and has bases in the UK, US and Australia.

AFFAIRS OUT OF CONTROL?

To prepare for Self Assessment you must get up-to-date now.



THIS jolly reminder from the Inland Revenue about self-assessment appeared in the *Sun* at the height of the corruption trial of Michael Allcock, the colourful senior taxman with a former call girl lover, etc. Do jobsworths at the Revenue have a sense of humour — or was this just another, er, Allcock-up?

NOOKS and CORNERS

SO, after months of agonising indecision with the whole nation holding its breath, the way England will celebrate the millennium is at last unveiled!

The biggest dome in the world is to be built at Greenwich — and all to mark the change in the first digit of our way of numbering the passing years. And just as the proposed Ferris Wheel at Westminster so perfectly symbolises the state of modern England by going round and round in circles, so a dome — a big, round, empty space — will perfectly express the essential vacuity of the event.

Nobody knows what we think we are celebrating, or why; but, in the absence of coherent belief in anything, we are determined to do something. The French, the Germans, the Italians are not planning anything so silly; but they are foreigners, of course.

And what a thrilling, wonderful surprise that the designer of this £350 million, half-mile-wide suspended up-turned saucer is our own Lord Rogers of Lloyd's! He just happens to be the vice-chairman of the Arts Council — but who else? Genius will out, of course. Is there no end to the talents of this bronzed and relaxed superstar? The concept is brilliant: a round... um, domed space, some 50 metres high, for some 50,000 people to disport themselves in. "A bold vision with which to enter the next millennium," announces the leader of Greenwich council. Actually, it is in fact a rather backward-looking gesture, but that can scarcely be helped.

For domes are in a tradition, of course. There was the Dome of Discovery at the Festival of Britain, a subtle and interesting structure by Ralph Tubbs with a span of 120 metres which the incoming Conservative government in 1951 destroyed out of sheer malice rather than let it be reused. But a much more exciting and relevant precedent is the great domed hall inside the Palace of the Soviets which Stalin planned to build in Moscow in the 1930s. And this was not just a dome: the hall was to be the base of a sort of Art Deco skyscraper topped with a huge 100-metre-high statue of Lenin. Perhaps that is what Greenwich needs: a giant image of a national hero placed on top of the dome to complete the composition. Paul Gascoigne? Or, better still, the great architect himself: Richard Rogers — in bronze!

But above all there was the colossal domed hall which Hitler planned at the end of the three-mile-long North-South Axis in Germania, the rebuilt Berlin. Given Lord Rogers's intimate and fruitful political relationship with our own future prime

minister Tony Blair, this precedent is of particular interest as it was designed by the Führer's favourite architect, Albert Speer.

The Berlin dome would only have been 140 metres in diameter — the Greenwich dome will be 350 metres across — but it would have contained a cheering, if unrelaxed, crowd of 180,000, and, rising to a height of 220 metres, would have been rather taller than Rogers's Pleasure Dome. And, had things gone differently and it had been built, Speer's Great Hall would have been permanent.



Rogers's dome, of translucent fabric suspended from 12 steel masts rather than of steel, is only for a temporary exhibition but "may become a permanent fixture if a long-term use can be found for it". And it must! How greatly one looks forward to the third millennium!

SO Chester cathedral is to celebrate the millennium by ripping up its irregular, dangerous old nave floor and replacing it by a nice, flat, practical new one designed by Ronald Sims (Eyes passim). In allowing this, and ignoring the advice of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, the Ancient Monuments Society and ICOMOS, among others, the Cathedral Fabric Commission for England has shown itself to be a gutless creature at the beck and call of cathedral architects.

The commission was set up to monitor alterations in cathedrals — historic buildings of national significance which were once above both planning law and the Church of England's own system of control — when the principle of grant aid from the state was accepted. This was a perfectly reasonable quid pro quo and the intention was, of course, that the commission would be impartial and independent. Some hope: this Chester decision shows the commissioners are so wet and establishment-minded they do just what go-ahead deans want. Pearson's floor at Peterborough will be the next to go...

'Piloti'

Upon his return to the wetlands, he (Manoel de Barros) rediscovered the animals, ranch hands, birds, trees, and those Biblical waters of his childhood. Then things got out of hand. He let the vines and waters cover his principles, his spectacles and his poetry. He created his own vernacular, a unique view of the Pantanal, its animals, and its waters.

Today, he thinks of himself as a streamist, experienced in pond scum, assailed by mud, a thistle's apprentice, impregnated by birds, trees and frogs, well-read in both butterflies and the sun. Snail style.

Icaro — Varig Inflight Magazine

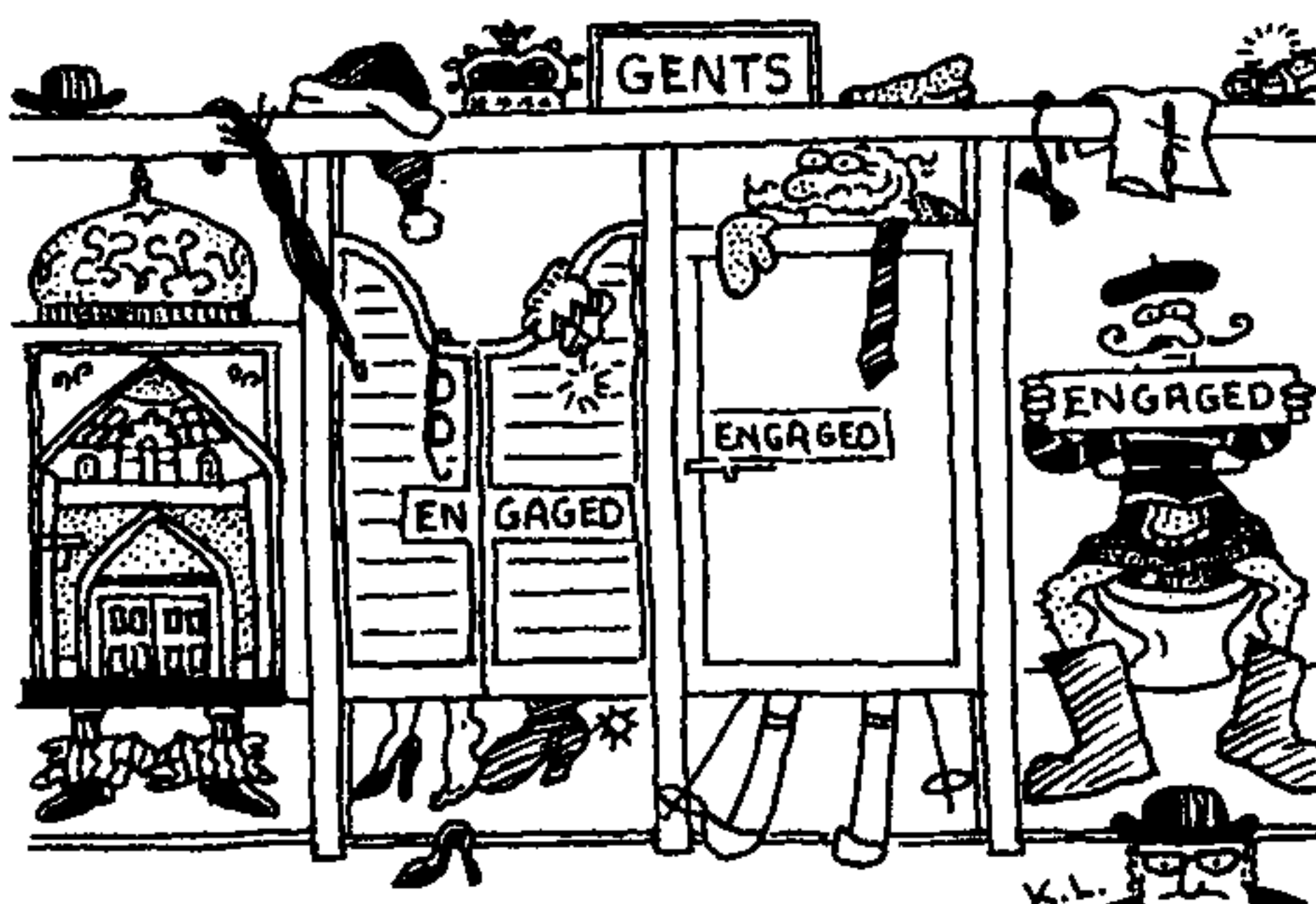
Look at the "H" in *THE EXPRESS*. It has a right angle and curve alternately in its inner corners. This, says Editor Richard Addis, subconsciously conveys "strength combined with flow and movement, adding up to progression".

UK Press Gazette

"Here's my pen. It's made of metal and plastic. Metal gives you guns and battleships; plastic is polymers and all the synthetic alternatives to nature. It has a clip: that involves fashion. And it's a machine, a writing implement. By association, it contains everything. If I threw it across a room, like the ape with the bone in 2001, it would reach to the end of the universe."

PETER GREENAWAY
Independent on Sunday

Pseud's Corner



Gents [novel by Warwick Collins] is a touching and brilliantly funny exploration of a clash of cultures and morals set in the underground world of a men's public urinal.

Catalogue, Marion Boyars Publishers Ltd

"There is a nice contrast between the openness of the flat and the tiny Alice-in-Wonderland feel to

the lavatory," Jason Cooper says. The lavatory is deliberately finished with raw wall plaster to give it a womb-like feel.

RACHEL KELLY
The Times

A defining function of literary writing is to witness the fictitious nature of all human endeavour and interpretation. The disclosure of the text's actual status shatters the mirage of representation and interrupts the suspension of belief. When William Hartnell or Tom Baker directly address the camera, we share an intimate secret which explodes the secrecy which makes intimacy possible. The flaunting of the text's fundament momentarily excludes the fundamentalist position. The arch moronism of the reiterated interpolation — "Doctor Who?" — deconstructs the programme's assurance of the exquisite significance of its principle of unimportant uncertainty.

ALEC CHARLES
Mayfield (Doctor Who fanzine)

CONTRIBUTORS: Gnome, J. & A. Abbott, D. Rose, S. Rischer, M. Peeck, N. Pegg.

£10 paid for entries

TIME

American Election '96 (BBC TV and radio)

THERE was an interesting difference between the coverage of the 1996 American presidential election in British newspapers and the programmes about it to be found on British television and radio.

Print journalists wrote about the diminished power of the presidency, the increasing irrelevance to Britain of American decisions, the terrible boredom of a race in which the incumbent president had been far ahead in the polls since the spring.

But on the BBC airwaves a different line was being taken. The "greatest democracy on earth" was electing "the most powerful man in the world". Britain should watch carefully because "when Washington sneezes, London catches a cold".

How to explain this difference of journalistic emphasis? Perhaps it had something to do with the need of BBC news and current affairs chiefs to justify the astonishing number of personnel from its directorate who had taken the plane to DC.

In the very week when the corporation was publishing a 250-page *Statement of Promises* to its viewers — including the promise to "keep up our attack on costs and cut waste wherever it occurs" — news and current affairs flew between 60 and 70 people to cover an election of which the result had never been in serious doubt and where, because of time differences, the central events take place in the early hours of the morning when almost no one is

watching or listening. Simultaneously, staff in other parts of the BBC were being warned of redundancies as a result of the latest restructuring of the organisation.

But, despite this and despite the presence in America of the largest corps of resident BBC reporters in any country, David Dimbleby and Jeremy Paxman and Peter Snow and Charles Wheeler all boarded a jet to Dulles airport. Justin Webb hosted *Breakfast News* from the US capital, while Edward Stourton fronted the *One O'Clock News* in front of the White House. Even Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill was flown over to host a special presidential edition of the zero-rating *Midnight Hour*. Over on radio, John Humphrys of *Today* was in DC, as was Nick Clarke of the *World At One* and Eddie Mair of Radio 5. Even Lance Price, one of the numerous "Westminster correspondents", got a plane ticket in order to explain for the *Today* programme the differences between our politics and America's.

The strongest objection to this

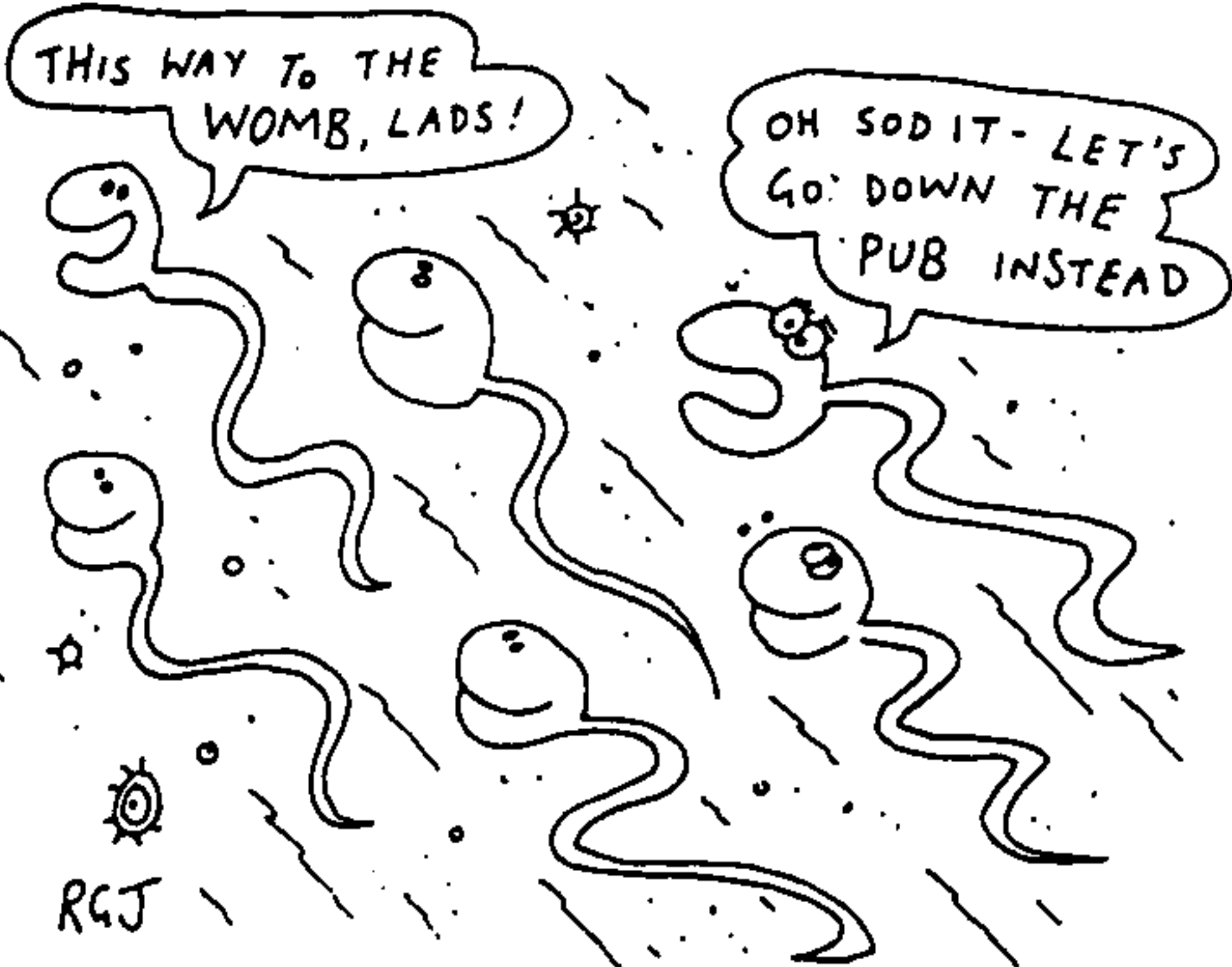
Moscow. The health of Boris Yeltsin might have genuine consequences for the citizens of Europe. The result of the Clinton-Dole race would not. Stourton was in the ludicrous position of standing on Pennsylvania Avenue but introducing stories from Russia.

Further insult was added by the technical incompetence of much of the coverage. On television, satellite links regularly collapsed and sound faded. While on radio the most regular and pertinent question asked by Humphrys during the American segments was: "Senator, are you still there? Can you still hear us?" Many of the presenters also seemed to be struggling to find things to do. For Wednesday's *World At One*, Nick Clarke had shuttled down to New York, where he conducted a turgid interview with Alastair Cooke about the election. Nowhere did Clarke reveal that he is currently writing the official biography of Cooke, which made the trip especially useful.

Through the Nixon, Reagan and Carter years, the practice of the BBC was to take a "feed" of one of the lavish American election night shows from one of the US networks. A Dimbleby and a Wheeler would add English glosses and fill in during commercial breaks. Now the massively arrogant news boys insist on knitting their own stuff. The problem is that the American networks have inevitably signed up all the top polls and hacks, leaving BBC shows with Senator Joe Schmuck of Idaho and J. Lunchtime O'Booze III of the *Oregon Morning Monitor*. As a result, BBC coverage is now both far worse and far more expensive than before.

No one blames the hacks for wanting to be there. American campaigns are the sweetest freebie of all. Moscow and Zaire simply don't have the same flight schedules and hotel range. And competition is particularly intense now, as Dimbleby is pushing 60 and Wheeler is as old as Bob Dole, so Paxman, Webb, Stourton and the rest are running hard for Campaign 2000. Viewers, though, might wonder how the '96 election fest squares with the BBC's pledge to cut costs and prevent waste.

'Square Eyes'



Semen Behaving Badly

hack diaspora is the cost. Brillo is well-known for his fondness for Concorde and it must profoundly be hoped that he went by coach this time. The bright and bushy-tailed air of many of the other presenters on their return to their London commitments — Dimbleby was in Washington on Wednesday morning, but presenting *Question Time* in London on Thursday night — suggests that they flew back, if not at the highest speed, then at the greatest comfort and, for us, expense.

But there is also a journalistic cavil about such an exodus. In the week that half of the BBC's newsgatherers and presenters were in Washington reporting on a one-horse race, the real story was in

MEDIA NEWS

FOUR years in the making and massively over-budget, Robert Hughes's new series *American Visions* is the latest "flagship" production to come from the BBC's beleaguered music and arts department. Alert viewers may wonder why the programme includes a credit for Bob Geldof as "co-producer", and a handsome plug for his production company, Planet 24.

Staff on the series are equally baffled, since Geldof and Planet 24 have never been involved in the production — never seen a frame of the rushes, never attended a viewing (not even the launch at the American embassy three weeks ago) and never contributed a single idea or a single penny to the series. Disgruntled BBC apparatchiks are also curious to know why Geldof and Planet 24 were given a six-figure "production fee", plus an unspecified number of "research trips" to America on Concorde.

The answer is simple. After Robert Hughes finished his famous series on modern art, *The Shock of the New*, he approached the BBC with the idea for *American Visions*. Nothing happened; but then Planet 24 got wind of the project and managed to pull off a commission to do it. Whereupon the then controller of BBC2, Michael Jackson, swiftly realised that the purveyors of *The Big Breakfast* were not ideally suited to mastermind a major highbrow series on art. Nick Rossiter, the executive producer at the BBC, actually made it a condition of taking on the job that Planet 24 would have no "creative input" whatever.

After much wrangling, a deal was struck to pay off Planet 24. But the small print of the agreement also specified that the BBC should maintain the pretence that Geldof was directly involved. Hence, only two weeks before transmission, the broadcast tapes were secretly reedited to include credits for Sir Bob and his company.

Robert Hughes is said to be incensed — not least because Geldof's production fee is rather higher than his own — and Hughes has written to Michael Jackson pointing out that the *Big Breakfast* gang haven't contributed a fart to the series. Still, no doubt Geldof will find the extra loot useful in financing his interminable legal battles with Paula Yates...

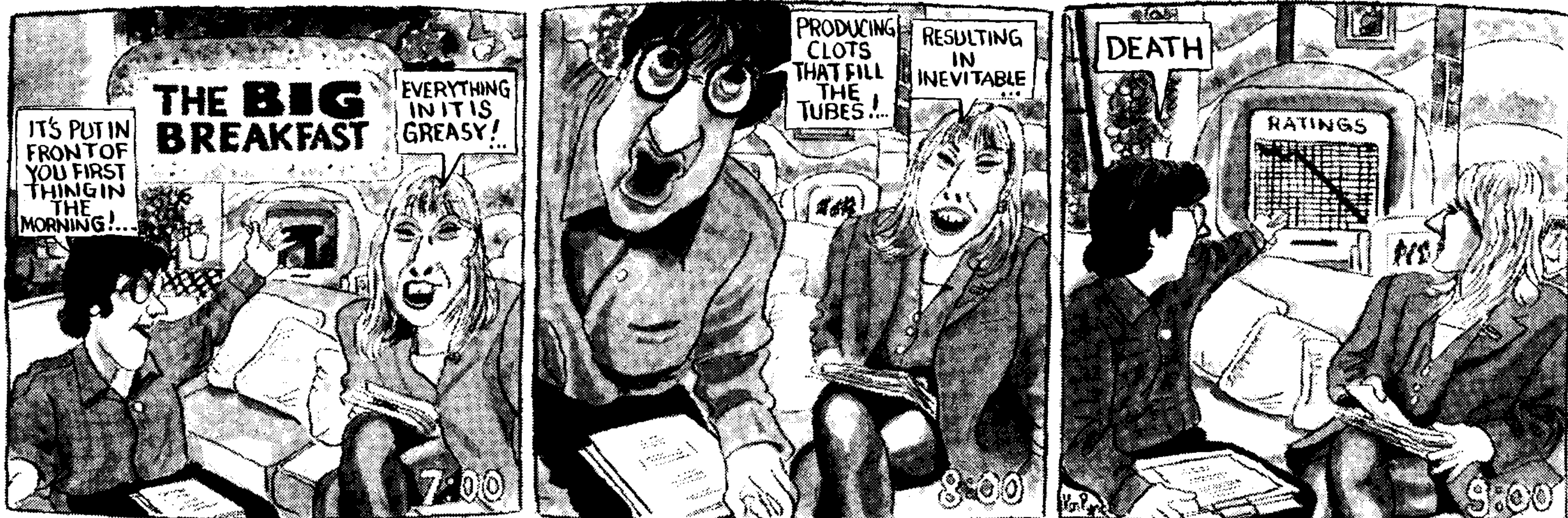
SENIOR executives at the BBC have a new nickname for their beloved leader: John Birt is now known as "East Ham", a reference to a station on the London underground.

Why so? As one colleague helpfully explains: "It's because he's one stop short of Barking."

CEE FUX

"The Prime Minister and Noddy were the stars of a show that also included other Enid Blyton characters."

BBC Ceefax page about John Major turning on the Oxford Street Christmas lights, 6/1/96.



MEDIA (Contd)

PANICKY news bosses at the BBC, horrified to find that their new, multi-million pound newsroom at Television Centre is too small to fulfil John Birt's preposterous "bi-medial" dreams, are now seriously considering the unthinkable — a mass exodus to Bush House, lair of the BBC's threatened World Service.

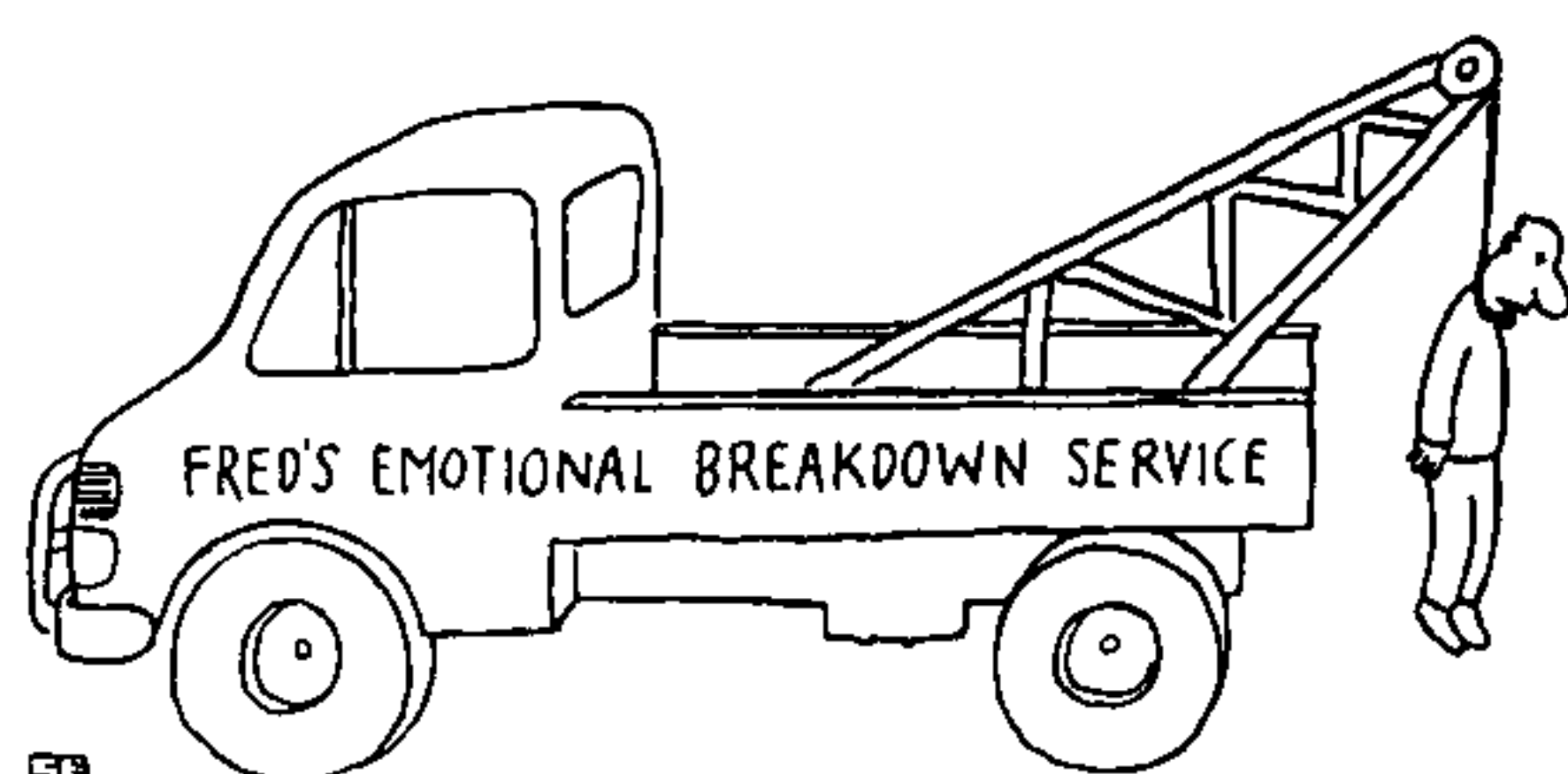
The building's Japanese owners, about to take charge of the gloomy granite pile at the end of its lease, can find no other use for it and are offering it back to the BBC on a shorter and much more expensive lease.

Such a move might help to placate critics of Birt's plan to disembowel the government-funded World Service. But it would horrify everyone else involved, and consign the whole of the BBC's news and current affairs "directorates" to a dark age of overcrowding and squalor, even worse than the hopelessly cramped Broadcasting House. But by then Birt will have completed his task of demolishing the BBC, and will no doubt have retired to the country with huge amounts of cash bestowed upon him by a grateful nation.

ITV is demonstrating its "commitment" to high quality factual programming... by all but killing off one of the channel's remaining serious documentary series.

Instructed by the franchise holders to make cuts of £2.5 million, Marcus Plantin, head of ITV's Network Centre, has predictably opted to axe 10 editions of the award-winning documentary series *Network First*. The move means it will be 1998 before there will be any new commissions for the strand.

It is interesting to speculate how hard ITV's head of factual programming, Paul Corely, fought to defend *Network First*, which specialises in hard hitting — but low rating — journalism. Corely hails from Carlton where "documentaries" means sophisticated viewing like, er, *Hollywood Pets*.



BBC Wales's head of drama, Karl "Bald Eagle" Francis, has been making more friends in the valleys.

When the station's drama budget unexpectedly had some money left over, Francis decided to commission some monologues.

Naturally he fulfilled his promises to seek out fresh, young talent when commissioning the writers, one of whom has yet to tell producers what his monologue will be about. But they can rest assured the writer in question will deliver the goods: he is none other than Bald Eagle himself.

GENTLEMAN journalist Magnus Linklater, who has been preparing a film for Channel 4 about Jeremy Thorpe, naturally hoped that Norman Scott would appear in it. Scott was originally reluctant, but was worn down over many months by Linklater's reassuring manner and immaculate pedigree — former editor of the *Scotsman*, author of a serious book on the Thorpe case, and so on.

When Scott rang with the glad tidings that he would cooperate after all, the phone was answered by Linklater's tremendously grand and well-connected wife, Veronica.

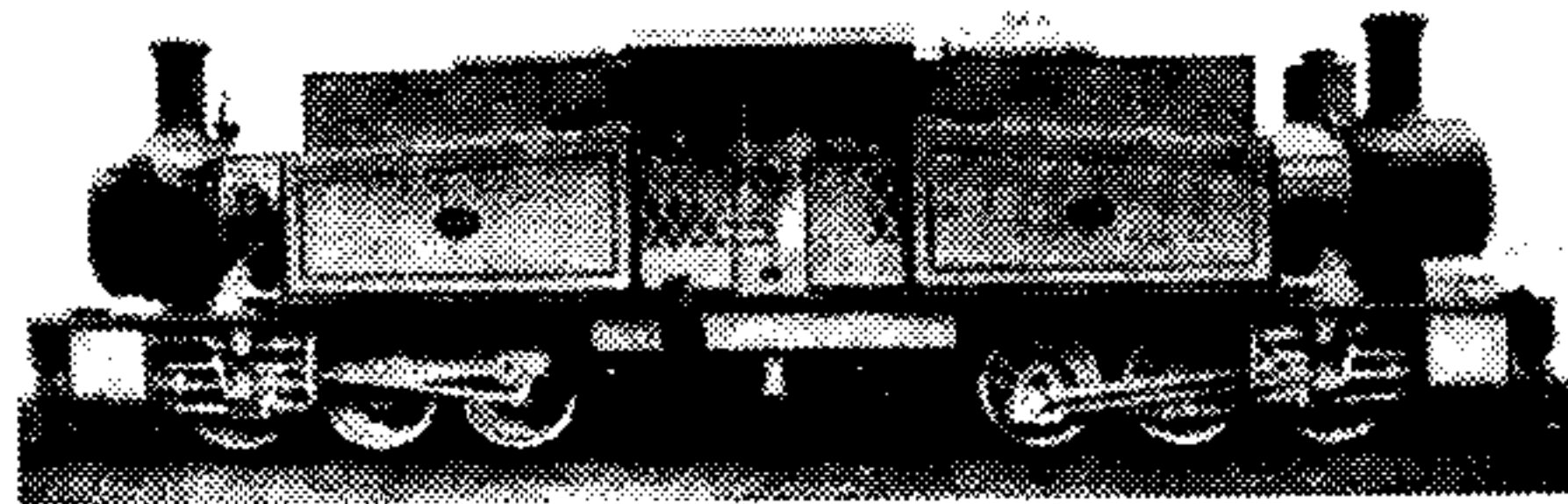
"It's Norman Scott here," he announced. "Could I speak to Magnus?"

"I'm afraid he's out."

"Could you give him a message, then, and tell him that I'm willing to be interviewed?"

"Certainly not!" Mrs L declared, in her best Lady Bracknell manner. "I think it's absolutely disgraceful that he should be having anything to do with someone like you!"

It now seems Linklater's programme will have to go ahead without the assistance of this crucial witness.



TRACK-WATCH

AS the election looms, some of Britain's heavyweight periodicals have started trying to make the privatised railway look better than its nationalised predecessor. But with so little evidence of improvement two-and-a-half years since privatisation started, hacks are clutching at straws or resorting to simple lies to portray a glorious new era of faster and cheaper travel.

The *Economist*, for example, gushed that bids were being invited "for a new high-speed route" between London and Glasgow. In truth all that is really proposed is modernisation of the existing route — which has been delayed for years by privatisation.

It also reported that Chiltern Railways had ordered 12 "express trains". In fact it only ordered 12 carriages to form four short trains. BR's Network SouthEast, by comparison, was ordering roughly 220 carriages a year until privatisation threw a spanner in the works.

To add to the illusion that the railways are getting investment at last, the *Economist* and the *Financial Times* also reported that Great Western Trains had cut journey times by up to 20 minutes. That 20-minute gain has been achieved not through investment but by cutting three stops from the schedule of a Sunday Penzance to London train, which now runs on direct line and not via Bristol.

Two almost identical articles in the *FT* and the *Times* sprinted off the starting blocks with the news that "Price wars are breaking out on railways" — only to run out of puff when it came to detailing the so-called price wars.

The hacks found only two examples of train operators competing with each other on fares — and they had to admit that one of the examples had existed under BR. What they forgot to mention was that the Office of the Rail Regulator had just

published definitions of the routes for which fares are now valid: for accounting convenience the definitions invalidate at a stroke a multitude of variant routes which had been available for decades under BR, so people using such routes now have to pay higher fares. The hacks also declined to say that franchisees are banned from starting new services which might compete with another operator because prospective bidders needed assurance that price wars would not break out before they would throw their hats into the ring.

These journals get away with publishing such distorted pictures because they pander to the "curled-up sandwich" view of BR held by the many people who never or rarely use trains. Those people know nothing of the immense improvement in services — particularly on provincial long-distance routes — BR achieved in the 1980s and are unaware that BR expanded its services while its subsidy was cut from £1.246 million in 1985/6 to £617 million in 1989/90 (at 1994/95 prices).

Taking advantage of this general ignorance, the *Economist* was able to claim that so many companies were bidding for franchises "that subsidies required to maintain the privatised services are significantly less than they were under BR". This refers to a subsidy of around £2 billion which was required by the residual BR and metropolitan transport authorities last year — a sum which had been doubled by fragmentation of the network for privatisation. On the evidence of the first 10 franchises let, the subsidy in 2003 is likely to be around £1 billion — considerably more than BR's best in 1989/90.

There is no doubt the new regime will be able to cut costs and improve services over the next seven years. The acid test, though, will not be how the rail network in 2003 compares with BR in 1995/6, or even 1993/4, but with how the network would have looked in 2003 had it remained intact. Given that BR was committed to replacing all its old trains in the south-east by 1997 and that it had halved its subsidy during the last period of economic growth, the odds are that the treasury and rail travellers would have been better off sticking with a unified rail network — with or without the curled-up sandwiches.

'Dr B. Ching'

IN RECENT weeks, the mystery of Rupert Murdoch's worldwide tax "avoidance" has at last come to the attention of the authorities.

The crisis was started, typically, by the greed and arrogance of the management of Murdoch's News Corporation. Early this year the company sued Michael Clinger, an Israeli citizen whose huge International Development Group is registered in a Caribbean tax haven, for £19 million, alleging overcharging on the "smart cards" which unlock Murdoch's satellite channels for subscribers.

The technology for the smart cards was developed in Israel, through Murdoch's company there, News Datacom. Immediately Clinger countersued Murdoch for several hundred million pounds, and the way was open for the leaks and counter-leaks which always accompany a feud between rich and powerful businessmen.

These culminated on 20 October in dawn raids on News Datacom's Israeli headquarters and the confiscation of thousands of confidential documents now being studied hungrily by the Israeli fraud police. All this has been gingerly reported by News Corporation's rival newspapers — but almost completely ignored by the Murdoch press itself.

The *Times*, for instance, reported on 21 October the Israeli dawn raids under the unobtrusive heading: DATACOM DENIES TAX EVASION. Some of Rupert's closest friends, however, are sticking by him. The *Jerusalem Post*, owned by Conrad Black and a former (failed) business associate of Murdoch, dismissed the whole story as "one big libel".

Other less sensitive Israeli papers have been reporting some of the juiciest items leaking from the tax inspectors: for instance that an Israeli government development grant and all the costs of research and development have been registered not, as they should have been, in Israel, but in Britain, which Murdoch is known to regard as a "pushover" for tax.

Senior News Datacom managers like Dove Rubin and Leo Krieger are said to have been paid "consultancy fees" in London for the same reason,

and false accounting trails have allegedly been laid all over the world to escape responsibility for Israeli taxes. Despite fervent denials from News Corp, the City is showing signs of nerves.

AMERICA is learning what a media monopoly is — courtesy of Rupert Murdoch.

British viewers are used to craven plugs for his newspapers on Sky Television and to the pathetic promotion of the satellite station in his papers' "news" pages.

But imagine the Americans' shock when they watched the New York Yankees win the World Series on Murdoch's Fox TV. Hardly had they seen the Yankees jumping on top of each other in delight than the Murdoch minions switched back to the studio to an announcer proudly telling them that the *New York Post* (prop: R. Murdoch) was already on the streets with the result. To prove it, he even held up a copy of the Murdoch rag. As Rupe once said: "A monopoly is a terrible thing — until you have one."

I-BSkyB

Des [Lismore] snoozed on his sofa in Fillongley, Warwicks, as Sky Movies showed a documentary about the making of Independence Day. He woke during a clip from the film, in which Sky newsreader Bob Friend warns that gigantic alien spaceships are heading for Earth. Irishman Des, who has not seen the hit movie, recognised Friend, saw the Sky News logo on the screen — and reckoned the bulletin was for real.

NICK PARKER
The Sun

CONTRIBUTOR: Francis Harvey.

DOING THE ROUNDS

WITH five months of the financial year still to go, both purchasers and providers are feeling the pinch. Oxfordshire health authority (purchaser) is £3.5 million in debt, while its main provider, John Radcliffe hospital, is £4 million under. Also in trouble, North Durham acute hospital trust (£6 million); East London and City HA (debts of £12 million this year, £18 million next year and rising); and Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth HA (£11.2 million this year, £14.2 million next).

The district health authorities could bail out the trusts if the regional health authorities bailed out the districts. Unfortunately, all the RHAs are in debt to, with South Thames (£32.7m), North Thames (£25.4m), Northern and Yorkshire (£18.5m) and South and West (£17.1m) worst affected. In essence, many NHS trusts now treat non-urgent patients for just the first six months of the year, when they run out of money and close up shop to all but the direst emergencies, leaving GPs to carry the can.

● **NO SOONER** had the United Leeds Teaching Hospitals trust awarded chief executive Stuart Ingham a salary of more than £100,000 (*Eye* 908), than it announced the closure 40 beds in a bid to curb its £11 million overspend.

● **CAMBRIDGE** GP Dr George Hopkinson likes to get the best for his patients so he referred a young man with osteoarthritis of the hip to a specific orthopaedic consultant at Addenbrookes whom he knows to be very good. The result? A four-year waiting list.

The hospital has now tried to block all emergency admissions except blue light ambulances since last autumn (*Eyes passim*), but GPs are still sending less-severely ill patients in because there is nowhere else for them to go. Another flu epidemic and the trust could burst at the seams.

● **QUEEN's** medical centre in Nottingham has imposed a blanket ban on routine surgery "for at least two months" claiming a £9 million budget cut from Nottingham health authority as the cause. The trust did itself no favours by putting on a burst

of activity early in the year to attract income, and then found it had exceeded its contracts and hoped the health authority would bail it out.

A similar situation has arisen at Kent and Canterbury hospital, which has treated more patients than one of its principal purchasers, a multifund of 17 GP practices, can afford. And fundholding practices in Solihull are so strapped for cash they've battled with consultants at Birmingham Heartlands and Solihull NHS trust to stop treating patients. The hospital is under pressure from the government to reduce waiting lists from nine to six months in time for the election, but the fundholders don't have the money to pay for it. The hospital then neatly passed the buck back to the GPs by sending the following letter to patients waiting for treatment. "The hospital has advised your GP of the need for your non-urgent operation... Your GP is a fundholder and therefore the person who must decide when you have your operation... Should you have any concerns about your treatment, please discuss it with your GP in the normal way."

Fundholding GP Dr Richard Pomeroy was not amused. "If they send that letter to one of my patients, they won't have another contract again. What they are doing is transferring responsibility directly to the GP. It will upset patients and polarise them from their GPs." Isn't that what fundholding's all about?

● **THE** day after George Walker retired as commissioning director for Sheffield health authority he began a new job with Primary Care Multifund Ltd, a specialist in providing health management services to GPs.

Walker's job with the health authority was to encourage fundholders to join together and contract out their financial affairs to a management company, and to help set up an out-of-hours service in the city. Six GPs have now joined together and contracted out their financial affairs in a £100,000 contract to... Primary Care Multifund Ltd. And GPs have also set up an out-of-hours service managed on a £35,000 contract by... Primary Care Multifund Ltd. Walker denies conflict of interest, but his former employer has asked the audit office to investigate.



"That one's for my station, that one's for my counsellor, and that one's for my lawyer"

● **KEN GRIFFITHS**, a dentist from Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, has sent an illuminating letter to his patients: "You may well be aware through various articles in the press and television about the problems facing the NHS dental service. Consequently, I have found it increasingly difficult to maintain the quality of care to which you have become accustomed and deserve, and to which I am committed... I have been looking for an alternative for some time and, in my search for an ideal alternative, I can now recommend Denplan Care..."

"Please note that there will be a limited number of people I can care for under Denplan Care, and I would urge you not to delay in registering."

Admittedly NHS dentistry is far from free (adults pay up to 80 percent of their treatment costs up to £325), but at £13.43 a month Denplan would be far more expensive for most. NHS patients who decide Denplan isn't for them, or who can't afford it, do have an alternative, however. "I would be delighted to continue to see you on a private basis, paying for treatment as you receive it." NHS dentistry, RIP.

M.D.

DOWN ON THE FARM



THE destruction of perfectly healthy cattle over 30 months old continues, with the rate of killing now reaching the 55,000 a week target promised by Roger Freeman (*Eyes passim*).

How this is managed — when renderers who process carcasses are limited to 35,000 a week — has not been disclosed, and the cost of storing the extra carcasses in freezer containers has proved prohibitive (*Eye* 910).

But the *Eye* can reveal that an ingenious solution has been found. Offal from normal slaughtering — the remains of pigs, sheep and under 30-month cattle — is being diverted away from the renderers where it would normally be processed into inert meal and bonemeal. It is being dumped raw in landfill sites, as far apart as the Midlands, Surrey and Essex, to make room for the over 30-month animal remains.

How long this heaving mass of rotting material, now accumulating at the rate of more than 5,000 tons

a week, can remain without causing a public health catastrophe has not been stated, but — given the lucrative nature of the tipping contracts — it is clear it will not only be the rats and crows that will be getting extremely fat.



OTHER beneficiaries of the 30-month slaughter, it seems, are some very bright Irish cattle dealers. Rightly appalled at so many high quality British beef animals being destroyed while their own aged "cull" cows are still allowed to be sold in Europe, they too have come up with an ingenious solution.

With free access to the British mainland they have been exporting their rejects to a number of quiet English farms where they are supposedly sent for processing and re-export. But quick swapping of ear tags with British animals destined for the incinerator turns low quality animals into prime beef — while HMG kindly disposes of the aged, now British, substitutes, paying of course the not-insubstantial compensation.

Of course this may mean French consumers are eating prime, healthy British beef instead of cast-off rubbish from Ireland. Fortunately the

French "beef police" seemed to have detected this scam and have moved in.



LAST year officials staked out a Lincolnshire rendering plant where animal waste products are boiled down to produce animal feed. They were seeking to catch errant hauliers delivering "specified bovine offal" (SBO) which they were prohibited from mixing with "clean" loads. On the night of 15 November their luck was in. After picking through an 18-ton load of "clean" offal delivered by an Essex haulier, they found a couple of cows' heads and some spleens — enough SBO, they thought, to get a conviction for the crime of allowing potentially BSE-infected material into the animal feed chain.

Last week the evidence was paraded before Lincoln magistrates in expectation of a stiff penalty. The defence claimed the haulier did not know SBO was present and had a "reasonable belief" that none would be included. The prosecution countered that, because the driver collecting from slaughterhouses had not — in addition to his normal checks — checked the offal while it was being tipped into his truck, insufficient precautions had been taken to sustain a reasonable belief that the load would be SBO-free.

However, it emerged that the reason SBO might have been present was that the Maffia's Meat Hygiene Service (MHS), stationed full-time at slaughterhouses, had cocked-up. Further, the adequacy of the haulier's checks had never been questioned by Maffia officials who had observed them for seven years without complaint.

It was only in September last year that the State Veterinary Service (SVS) began spot checks on slaughterhouses. In 48 per cent of sites visited controls were found to be "unsatisfactory", revealing a massive breakdown in a system which was implemented and supervised by the MHS and the SVS. Interestingly, this news broke in late April 1996 and only in May — surely a complete coincidence — summonses were taken out against the Essex haulier.

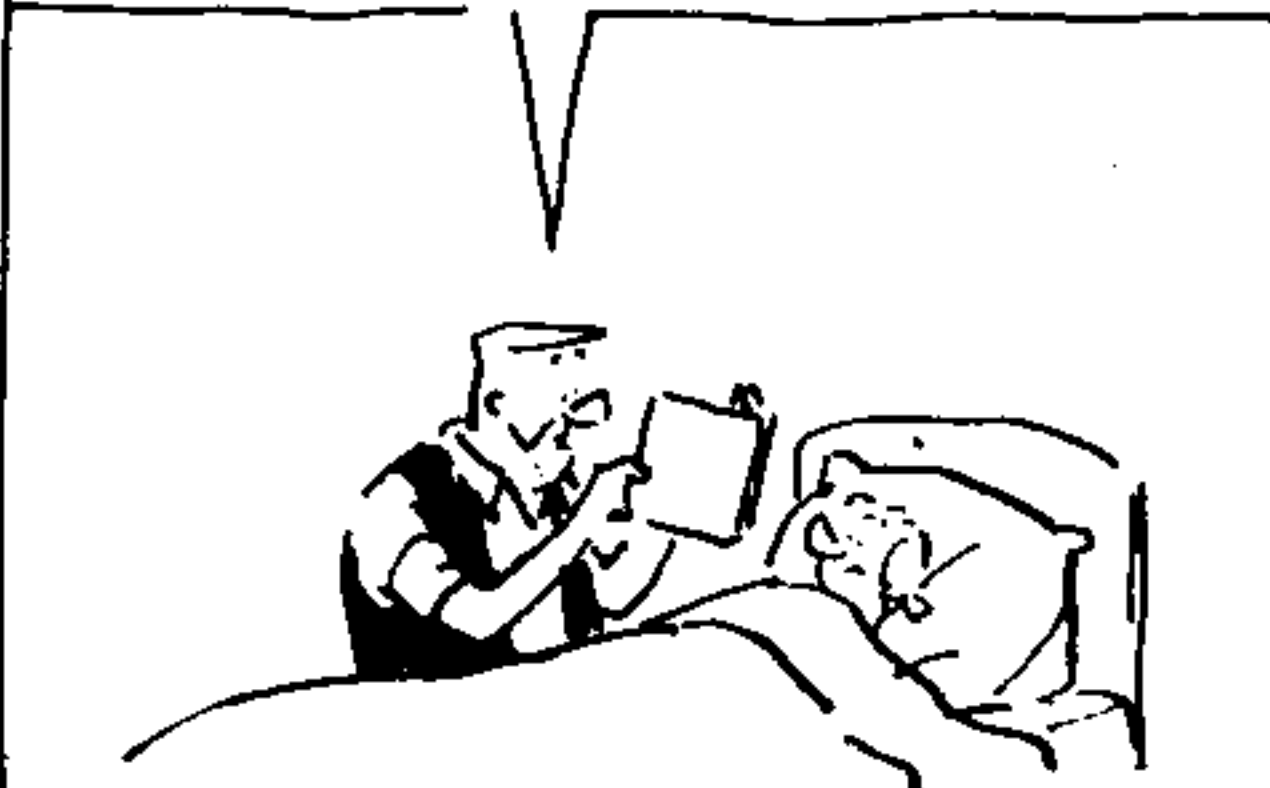
Not unexpectedly, the Lincoln bench was unimpressed by the officials' diligence and dismissed the case. The haulier got off — but then so did the officials.

'New Muckspreader'

Old Macdonald

ALBERT

... AN' THE WICKED WITCH
GAVE BEAUTIFUL SNOW
WHITE AN APPLE....

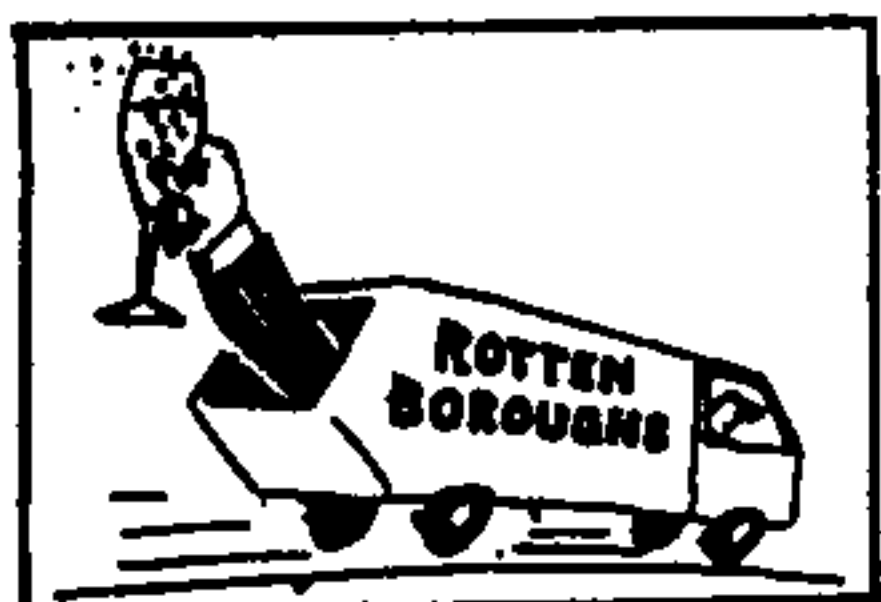


AN' WHEN SHE BIT IT
SHE FELL INTO A SLEEP
FOR ONE HUNDRED YEARS!



BLEEDIN' FRENCH
GOLDEN DELICIOUS!





THE Rotten Borough Advertiser

Friday, 15 November 1996



LAMENTABLE LAMBETH

BUSINESS as usual in Lambeth town hall, where there has been much mirth over an industrial tribunal featuring Sue Crawley.

She worked for the council for 17 years and claims she was sacked after failing a rigged interview for the job of chauffeur to the mayor. It went to colleague John Atkinson, who, it was claimed, was having an affair with then Labour mayor Pauline Watson.

Crawley's manager Tim Afful has told the tribunal how town hall boss Mark Clarke said to him: "Fucking hell, Tim, do you want that fucking lazy Sue to work for you? Who wants that fucking woman around?" And now people are saying exactly the same about Mark Clarke, who has stayed on the council payroll despite being made redundant last November. Unkindly, the tribunal heard this was somehow linked to the

fact that his wife, Irene Clarke, is the director of personnel.

Elsewhere, auditors found that more than 700 items of council equipment (including dustcarts, lawnmowers and heavy rollers) have disappeared. This is probably an underestimate as Lambeth never kept records of where equipment was stored. A full audit of every school has also been ordered following realisation that £1m has "gone missing" from the education budget.

At housing, instead of breaking even the department is £4m in the red: leaseholders can expect rent and service charge increases. Further problems loom with the threat of hundreds of housing benefit claimants seeking compensation for the stress of facing eviction — all due to Lambeth's inability to process HB claims. A

disciplined if they refused to prepare the information.

Some cynics suggested the system could identify how many poor people — ie probable Labour supporters — lived in each voting division; but they were dismissed as cranks: the information would not be used for party political purposes but to help the authority identify areas of high poverty so that money for regeneration could be targeted accordingly.

Officers, still not convinced, asked for the whole thing to be put in writing. Mysteriously the scheme was then shelved — though there is still space on the computer programme for the details to be inserted if and when Westminster feels like indulging in another spot of gerrymandering.

PS: Lady Tesco, aka Dame Shirley Porter, who once supported the surcharging of councillors provided they were not Tory, has seen the light and told the Nolan committee the system should be scrapped. In an amazing coincidence, Westminster council has given its views to Nolan as well — and it also wants surcharging consigned to the dustbin. This has nothing to do with the fact that Lady Tesco and five Westminster cronies were surcharged a whopping £31 million by the district auditor for their disgraceful role in rigging elections in favour of the Tory party.

Camberwell council tenant has been awarded £500 after Lambeth admitted it twice summoned the tenant to court for rent arrears while the tenant's HB claim was unprocessed for 18 months.

PS: An internal investigation of staff who get into rent arrears with the council identified one employee who owed £13,000. Her job? Advising the public how to cope with rent and debt problems.

PPS: The Lib Dems' grip on "local" politics continues. Coun Hugo Barker lives and works in Latvia and must make a 3,000 mile round trip if he should deign to attend Lambeth meetings. Coun Maurice Cronly, dubbed the Member for Croatia, works in Bosnia; while Adrian Hamilton-Mayer has spent more time in Lambeth of late — when he's not with his airline company in San Francisco or New York.

SILLY BUGGERS

SHETLAND council chief executive Michael Green has admitted spending £20,000 on hi-tech anti-bugging gear to scan the town hall for surveillance equipment before council meetings. His move came after a local hack claimed scanning radio receivers were being used to tap in to secretive council sessions.

Green admitted at an open council session that equipment had been bought to protect sensitive meetings between the council and the oil industry on the future of the Sullom Voe oil terminal.

Various oil companies which use the terminal pay vast sums into a trust fund for the Islands Council (currently thought to be about £500m). Despite this, local taxpayers will stump up the £20,000 for the anti-bugging equipment's installation.

RED, RIG, FACE OF THE WEEK

MORE on last issue's red faced Ian Clague, chief technical officer in Douglas, Isle of Man, who was caught drink-driving after telling council staff how they would be disciplined if they were intoxicated on duty. Shortly after this, Mr Clague was promoted to first borough services officer and given a payrise. Trebles all round!

IN BRIEF

WOKING: The drab Surrey borough must make £850,000 cuts — but its crappy new logo (cost: £6,260, or one meal a day for a pensioner for 11 years) will be unaffected. The old logo had the council shield above the words "Woking Borough", while the new one has the shield above the words, er, "Woking Borough". Woking also plans a 650ft millennium tower at a cost of £20 million (council money; private money; lottery money, etc, etc), which could house a huge imprint of the new logo.

HARLOW: Tony Blair identified Harlow as a flagship Labour authority and a model for a Labour government. When he flew there by helicopter he didn't land at the heliport near the town hall, but behind closed gates at a sports centre — thus avoiding a demo by workers who face the sack from the "flagship" and wanted to ask Blair about its £2m cuts package.

HACKNEY: The new squeaky clean code of conduct has already hit the buffers over potential conflicts of interest arising from personal relationships. Page 12 of the draft has been returned to the borough solicitor for redrafting — which provides a welcome respite for Coun Simon Mathews, who as housing chair was involved in talks about the disposal of land and property with a firm called Agudas Israel, one of whose unpaid directors is Denise Robson, Labour parliamentary candidate for Maidenhead and wife of Simon Mathews — which he forgot to mention.

ISLE OF MAN: Manx mayor David Christian was relieved when allegations of impropriety against him were withdrawn. But he remained under investigation and on police bail until the attorney-general decided not to press charges. The exact allegations, made and then withdrawn by an unnamed man, have not been revealed.

THE MALICE OF WESTMINSTER?

MORE interesting stories emerge in gerrymandering Westminster which may require the district auditor's attention.

Until recently the council was monitoring all benefit claimants ward by ward. When bemused staff asked why this unusual system was being adopted, they were told it was standard practice at local authorities and they would be

JUNKET OF THE WEEK

CARDIFF county council has spent £20,000 in three months on junkets to Norway, Canada, the US, Spain, Holland and Germany to study sports stadiums, education, traffic and waste management. Labour leader Russell Goodway defended the most expensive, a £13,000 jaunt to America and Canada, saying it would save money — something the council knows all about: councillors and officers flew out the day after cutting £900,000 from the budget for children with special needs, school transport and supply teachers.

TRIVVIES*



"Philip Franks rang up and said 'Do you want to play Hamlet?' This huge wave of relief came over me as I realised I wouldn't be mentally ill in 10 years' time for having not played Hamlet."

MICHAEL MALONEY
Independent.

Submitted by: Francis Harvey

An occasional column devoted to gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.

*formerly "Luvvies"



So you want a £5,000 loan to buy a car?



Yet you don't have an account with us. You've no job, no prospects, a criminal record



Cut the bullshit. Is it Yes or No?!



HUSBAND

Letters

Private Eye

THE SCOTSMAN
Scotland's National Newspaper

FAX
URGENT

To: PRIVATE EYE, 10, GERRARD ST, LONDON W1P 9DT
From: SCOTSMAN JOURNALISTS, 10, GERRARD ST, LONDON W1P 9DT
Subject: WE UNDERSTAND THAT YOU HAVE A RECENT PHOTOGRAPH OF OUR NEWLY APPOINTED EDITOR-IN-CHIEF. WE WOULD LIKE TO PUBLISH IT IN THE NEXT EDITION OF THE EYE SO WE MAY RECOGNISE HIM WHEN HE TAKES UP HIS DUTIES NEXT MONTH.

Sir,

We understand that you have a recent photograph of our newly appointed editor-in-chief. We wonder if you could publish it in the next edition of the EYE so we may recognise him when he takes up his duties next month.

SCOTSMAN JOURNALISTS,

The Scotsman.



On the surface

Sir,

Re: "Biffa Bung" (Rotten Borough Advertiser, 4 Oct). There is no mystery surrounding the payment of £10,000 by Biffa to the former Merthyr Tydfil borough council.

The leader of the council had announced at a public meeting that he was endeavouring to obtain such a sum from Biffa to meet the cost of completing the resurfacing of a street in the vicinity of their waste disposal site.

A cheque from Biffa in the sum of £10,000 was eventually received by the borough council on 27 April 1995. However, only £8,500 was actually needed to cover the extra resurfacing costs and the remaining £1,500 was allocated towards the cost of an adjacent landscaping scheme. I advised the secretary of the local action committee of this sequence of events in my letter of 31 July 1995 (copy enclosed).

The visit to Goir-au-Bois entailed one night's stay (not two, as reported by you) in Brussels to view the type of leachate treatment plant that would be constructed at Dowlais. There is no similar plant at Pontypridd, or any other nearby location, as you suggest.

Both the visit to Brussels and the £10,000 community benefit were fully dealt with by landfill site liaison committee on 5 December 1995 at which the public were represented (copy extract of minutes enclosed).

Members have not been silenced on these issues as you suggest, but the local liaison committee considered that these matters had been properly accounted for and would not be discussed again by that particular committee. Please have the courtesy to print this letter in full.

Yours faithfully,

ROGER V. MORRIS,

Chief Executive, Merthyr Tydfil county borough council.



"Look, I must go - autumn is my busy time"

Profit of loss

Sir,

Am I the only EYE reader to feel a wave of nausea reading the comments of Andrew Scott-James on Matthew Harding?

I find the words "innocent" and "Lloyd's names" to be antonymous. I'm no Chelsea fan, but at least Mr Harding put money into the football team he loved to the benefit of thousands; parasites like Scott-James put their profits into offshore tax havens to the benefit of no one but themselves. If Mr Harding was the cause of bankrupting "names" then that's one more point in his favour as far as I'm concerned. Serves the greedy bastards right.

Yours faithfully,
JONATHAN HULL,

London E5.

Science fiction

Sir,

Your columnist "Old Muckspreader" [sic] appears to have a coroner's intuition in the area of BSE; he is able to come to definite conclusions in an area where the recognised authorities find it wise to hedge their bets. Could it be that he/she is one of the nine people in Fleet Street with a science-related university degree? Unlikely, considering that he/she writes a science-based column.

Regards,
WILLIAM ERRINGTON (DR),

London SW4.

Sleeping partners

Sir,

Re: your piece in Literary Review. I may not be sleeping with Anthony Cheatham or Georgina Capel but I will, along with my colleagues at Macmillan, be publishing Michael Grade's autobiography IT SEEMED LIKE A GOOD IDEA AT THE TIME.

With best wishes.

Yours,
GEORGINA MORLEY,
Editorial Director, Macmillan.

Porn again reader

Sir,

I'd like to add my voice to that of Anon's (EYE 910) when he found your organ nestling with "Breasts In Jelly". I had to ask for your mag in a newsagents in Stratford-Upon-Avon after scanning the shelves for some time to no avail. The middleaged lady behind the counter stood, arms crossed, as I enquired "Do you stock PRIVATE EYE magazine?" The reply that came was — "Just because I work here it doesn't mean I have to help you find your dirty books!" At this point the manager put in an appearance and asked Margaret (for it was she) if everything was all right. Margaret

repeated her complaint to an audience of four as other customers gathered. Shocked and embarrassed, I decided to leave only to find that the sniggering bastard behind me had a copy of — wait for it — PUNCH! Do I get a free subscription for loyalty in the face of adversity?

Yours etc,
GARY PARKER,

London W12.

(No. Ed.)

Aide memoirs

Sir,

You say that the two-volume mayoral memoirs of Les Cooper have been rejected by commercial publishers and that they have been published by Crewe and Nantwich borough council with the so-called publicity officer "knocking them into shape". You even suggest that the ratepayers will foot some awful bill if they are not successful.

I am the former editor of the CREWE GUARDIAN. For four months I worked as press officer for Crewe and Nantwich borough council.

Les Cooper had previously shown me his memoirs, which are of a very high standard, and I had published excerpts in the GUARDIAN. They cover his childhood years and his time as an apprentice at Crewe Works during the war — but commercial publishers were not interested in something which they perceived to be of only local interest. When I left the borough council, I offered to edit and typeset Mr Cooper's memoirs free of charge as a gesture of goodwill. It had previously been agreed that they would be sold to benefit his Mayor's Charity. The council's reprographics unit did the printing.

I did not "knock them into shape" any more than any other editor or page designer does. Cllr Cooper's memoirs are extremely well-written. He was told at school that he should be a journalist. Instead, like other boys in 1930s Crewe, he counted himself lucky to get into the Locomotive Works when he left school. Hundreds of people had their basic talents stifled in this way.

Cllr Cooper had sold 40 copies of his books, OVER MY SHOULDER and ANOTHER'S WAR, before they were even launched in September and they are selling like hot cakes. The ratepayers have so far footed a bill for 250 copies of each book at about £3 a book. Last time I was at the council offices they said he was well on the way to paying for the basic costs and boosting his Mayor's Charity Fund.

To say that Cllr Cooper's books were "not wanted" is cruel. They are wanted and people are enjoying them enormously. They are a superb social history of the 1920s, 30s and 40s — as well as being a very moving record of the effects of enemy bombing on a small community.

Yours sincerely,
ANNE LOADER (MRS),
Northwich, Cheshire.

Lookalike



Chancellor



Cook

Sir,

Have any other readers noticed the similarity between that upper-class fat cook, Clarissa Dickson-Wright, and our working-class fat chancellor, Kenneth Clarke MP? Far be it from me to make any jokes about cooking the books or the like...

Regards,
ALAN MUNDY,
London N16.

I-SPY Newquay, Cornwall



Submitted by Colin Wood. £10 paid for similar submissions. (SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)

Swedish movies

Sir,

With reference to Hackwatch: Morality Play (1 Nov), the film THE VIRGIN SPRING shown on Sky Movies on 13 June is an INGMAR BERGMAN masterpiece and one of the great films of world cinema.

Yours sincerely,
TIM WAITE,

Letchworth, Herts.

Shiftless

Sir,

Re: Cartoon in Doing the Rounds, EYE 910. Show me a nurse who has ever worked a 36-hour shift. The longest shift any nurse works is 12 hours, and believe you me they spend every minute of those twelve hours whingeing. Perhaps you are confusing nurses with us doctors, whose maximum period on duty is 54 hours — that's 2½ days to the rest of you.

Yours wearily,
DR MARK WELFARE,

North Shields.

Judge advocate

Sir,

I have been a subscriber to your magazine for over 25 years. I am cancelling my subscription following the appalling unfounded libellous attack on Lord Justice Judge in your last edition.

I have known Lord Justice Judge for 26 years having first instructed him when I became a solicitor in 1970. I know from personal experience over a long period of time that there is no one involved in the administration of justice in this country who has a greater concern for justice and the rights of the citizens of this country. You have, over the years, been rightly critical of the fact that some judges appear to be out of touch with the real world. This could never be applied to Lord Justice Judge. He is the sort of person that the judiciary needs in this country and your attack is without foundation. It appears to be based merely on the coincidence that he was involved in a number of high-profile cases, particularly as a prosecutor. As you know, as prosecuting counsel he would have no influence whatsoever over the court's decision.

I hope that you will be big enough to offer an apology but, sadly, I suspect that this will not be the case.

Yours faithfully,
P.W. BENNETT,

Daventry, Northants.

Action stations

Sir,

In EYE 910 Piloti has well and truly celebrated your organ's 35th anniversary!

Regarding Cutty Sark station, yes, this is indeed intended primarily — though certainly not exclusively — for tourists. Whether we like it or not, tourism is one of our country's major currency earners. Moreover, the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) already serves the Tower of London. To have failed to build a station at Cutty Sark — and thereby missing the golden opportunity of providing a direct public transport link between two of London's key tourist attractions — as well as that at Greenwich (interchanging with the former British Rail station) would have made the DLR Lewisham extension hardly worth building.

As for the Sheringham fishermen's [sic] sheds,

all this ardent fan of reptilian satire can say is "Eat your heart out, Monty Python!"

Best wishes,
TIM HALL,

London SW15.

A walkover

Sir,

I have just walked the entire coastline from John O'Groats to Lands End and back. Three times! I wore no shoes whatsoever, and did not get pregnant at any time, or take drugs. I do not smoke. Is this a record and can I have the money now? I think I shall write a book.

MERVYN WOODWARD,

Teignmouth, Devon.

NB: All of the above is not necessarily completely true. But I shall go back and retell any lies I may have missed out whilst I was on the train. Mervyn.



Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"We were a little bit outnumbered there — it was two against two."

FRANK McLINTOCK, Sky Sports
(J. Slater)

"Talk us through the match from your bird's eye view on the pitch..."

HELEN CHAMBERLAIN, Sky Sports 2
(J. Friary)

"John Lennon would have had his 56th birthday today. How old would he be if he was still alive?"

PAULA WHITE, Radio Trent
(Mark White)

"Three men were shot in the legs, in the Waterworks area."

BBC Radio 4 News
(John Taylor)

Kilroy-Silk: Did you mean to get pregnant?

Girl: No. It was a cock-up.

ITV
(Stewart Bevan)

Letter From Pakistan

from Our Own Correspondent

WHAT a mess. After our president Farooq Leghari, under pressure from the invisible government (the army), sacked prime minister Benazir Bhutto, we again find ourselves without an elected government but with a Bhutto in opposition making angry noises.

Earlier this year president Leghari sent for Ms Bhutto and her husband Asif Zardari (the minister for kickbacks in the dissolved government) and warned them that the economy was in a mess and that all ministers seemed to be interested in was making money. Mr Zardari took offence and insulted Leghari, implying that the president himself was tainted. At this point Leghari asked Zardari to leave the room and pleaded with Ms Bhutto to get her government and husband under control. She smiled.

A few months after this exchange, Benazir's estranged brother, Murtaza, telephoned Zardari and asked for a summit meeting, man to man, in Karachi. It was time, he said, to end the family feud. Murtaza's loathing of Zardari was no secret. He told his friends he had a portrait of Zardari glued to his commode so that every time he urinated or defecated it made him laugh.

Murtaza's truce call was always suspect, but his brother-in-law was taken in. They agreed to meet alone, without guards, at the house of a common friend in Karachi. At the meeting, however, Murtaza's bodyguard suddenly appeared and grabbed Zardari. While he was in their grip, Murtaza shaved off one half of the Zardari moustache — a supreme insult in the feudal world.

Zardari fled and shaved off the other half, telling friends he had done so on the advice of the intelligence service in order to ward off likely assassins. A few weeks later, Murtaza was shot dead outside his Karachi house by armed policemen. It was a premeditated murder.

Benazir broke down, claiming her brother's killing was an attempt by the elite to wipe out her family. Military intelligence spread the word that Zardari was behind the killing and it now appears they are looking for "proof" to involve him. If they succeed, Benazir, an anguished spectator during her father's rigged trial and murder, could see the same happen to her husband. Unless... unless of course she agrees to go quietly with her three children and retire permanently to the English countryside. Then Zardari might be pardoned and could join her later.

This is one of the scenarios being plotted by the ISI (Inter-Services Intelligence) at the moment, but it has one crucial weakness. The Bhuttos have always been better out of power than in, and the signs are that Benazir will not relinquish her place easily. Indeed, it appears that she will fight back. Within the next few months (or so she thinks) the people, who have short memories, will forget the inability of her government to do anything for them and will see her as a wronged woman. She has already donned the martyr's mantle and is preparing to embark on a nationwide tour.

If her instincts are right and the people flock to her as they did before she came to power, her position will become very dangerous. A cornered establishment might go for the time-honoured solution. There have been more political assassinations of prime ministers in our sub-continent than the rest of the world put together. Your English countryside might well be safer.

HOM SAP

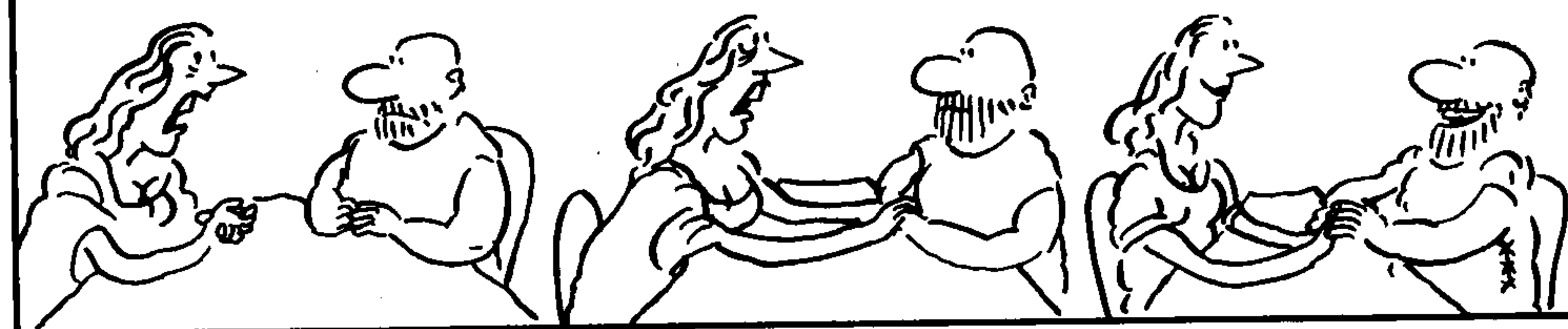


AUSTIN

I'VE TAKEN DRUGS. HAD BIZARRE SEX. BEHAVED SCANDALOUSLY.

I NEED HELP AND ADVICE.

DON'T WORRY. I'LL FIND YOU A PRESS AGENT.



● The new book, Colemanballs 8, is on sale now — £3.99

FUNNY OLD WORLD

● "But for the timely appearance of a nursing mother, Mr Aquadah would surely have drowned in a pool of human excreta," Stephen Asumang Duodu told viewers during a news broadcast on Ghana TV. "You see, the farmer, who had been having a runny stomach for five consecutive days, went to the busy public convenience at Asensu Bar in Ashaiman to ease himself on the morning of September 9th. Assessing the situation, Mr Aquadah felt that it would not do him good to wait his turn in the long queue, since his bowels were threatening to discharge their contents, so he went round the back where all the turds feed into the mother of all cesspools."

"As he positioned himself near a convenient spot, the ground, made slippery by faeces thrown carelessly about, skidded him and he plunged backwards into the cesspool, hitting his head against a concrete slap. Luck, however, smiled upon him because a nursing mother saw him drowning in the pool of human waste, raised the alarm, and he was rescued. Even so, he had to be given medicine to induce vomiting, because he had gulped in copious amounts of waste material. He is comfortable, though still off his food." (The Mirror (Ghana) 21/9/96. Spotter — D. O'Neil)

● "Without my wife, life would not be worth living," Harold Millwether told police in an attempt to persuade them to drop attempted murder charges against his wife Suzanne. "Yes, she has tried seven times to kill me, but on most occasions she just got out of the wrong side of the bed. I'd say pre-menstrual tension is to blame."

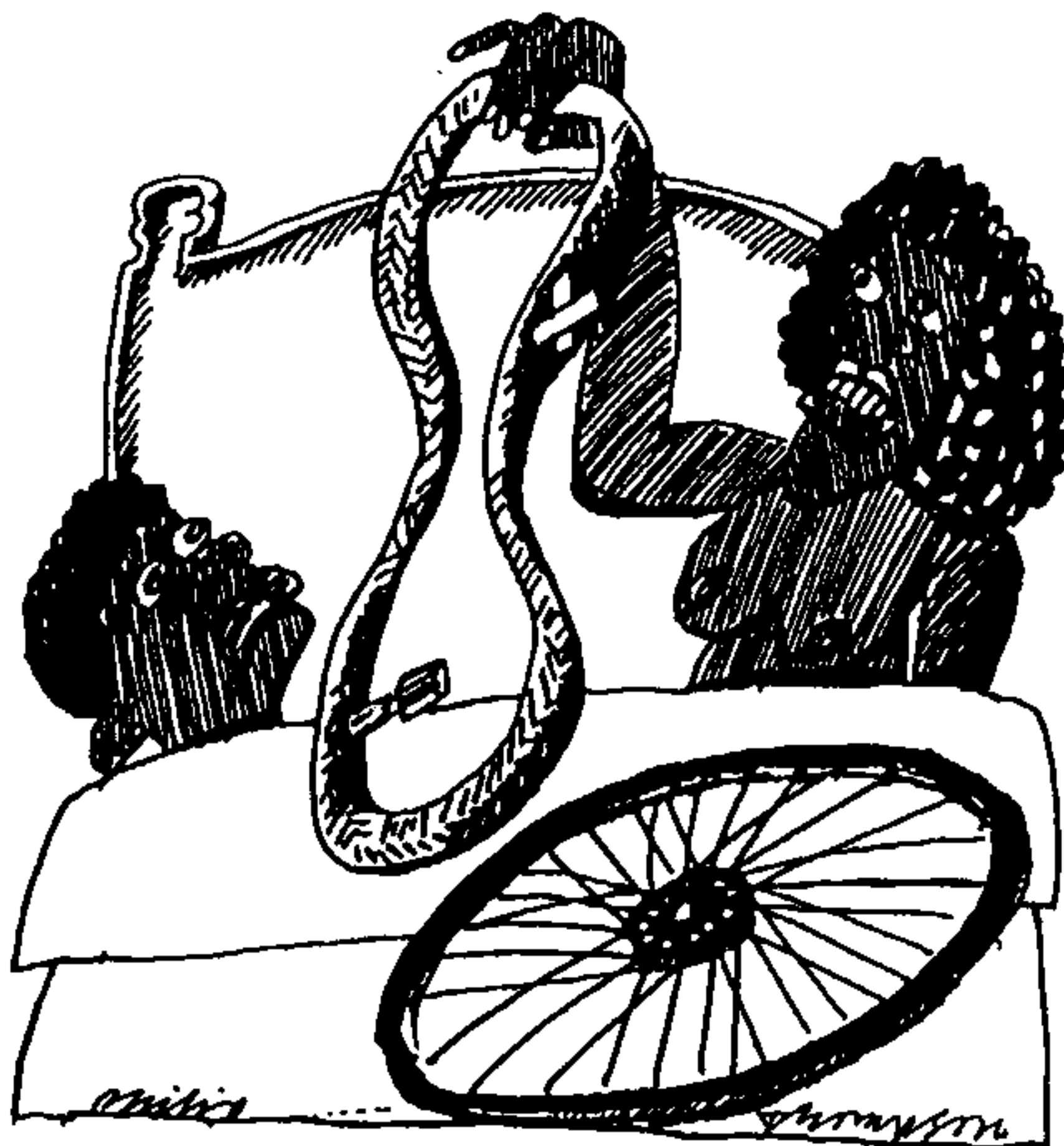
A spokesman for the La Jolla police force later itemised the fifteen murder attempts forty-five-year-old Suzanne had made on her Californian stockbroker husband's life over a four-month period: "First, she poisoned his gin and tonic, but he noticed the odd taste and threw it out. Then attempted to set him alight while he slumbered in front of the television but he woke up when his sideburns burst into flames. Next, she hired a killer to run his car off the road, but Mr Millwether refused to yield and the other car lost control. She dropped a mains radio into his bath, but the plug came out, and she arranged a drive-by shooting, but the would-be assassin's gun jammed."

"Then she tried drugging him and smothering him with a pillow, but he managed to fight her off. She shot at him several times during a hunting trip but her aim wasn't good and she missed. And she tried to run him down with her car, but he bounced right off the fender and sustained only minor wounds."

"However, Mr Millwether has assured us that they've now sorted out their problems, and that, if the police will only leave them alone, they'll be as happy as the day they got married. I sure hope he's right." (South China Morning Post, 23/9/96. Spotter — George Adams)

● "Many women do not realise that there is nothing as damaging to a man's ego as telling him that he is sexually weak," Mrs Florence Khatievi of the Kakamega Municipality told a press conference. "When they ridicule their husbands as 'he who goes to bed with his trousers on' or 'a dead battery,' their taunting can lead to divorce, suicide, or even murder."

Mrs Khatievi was attempting to combat the widespread belief in Kenya that cycling causes impotence. "Increasing unemployment has forced many men, pinched by poverty, to resort to the Boda Boda (taxi bicycle) business. Pedalling all day in the hot sun makes the husbands exhausted, but their wives demand their 'rights



of the home' at night, and taunt the men when they cannot perform, calling them 'flat tyre,' 'Mr Maggot' or even 'midget tape worm', names implying that their potency is questionable. This makes the problem worse and the wives come to us, either demanding divorces or asking for their 'bed rights' to be granted through our offices. I blame inflation, which causes the men to spend all day thinking about how to save their money, a brain activity that is devastating to one's sexual health." (Daily Nation [Kenya], 10/9/96. Spotter — Hugh Levinson)

COMPILED BY

Victor Lewis-Smith

The Lottery Winners

TURNER

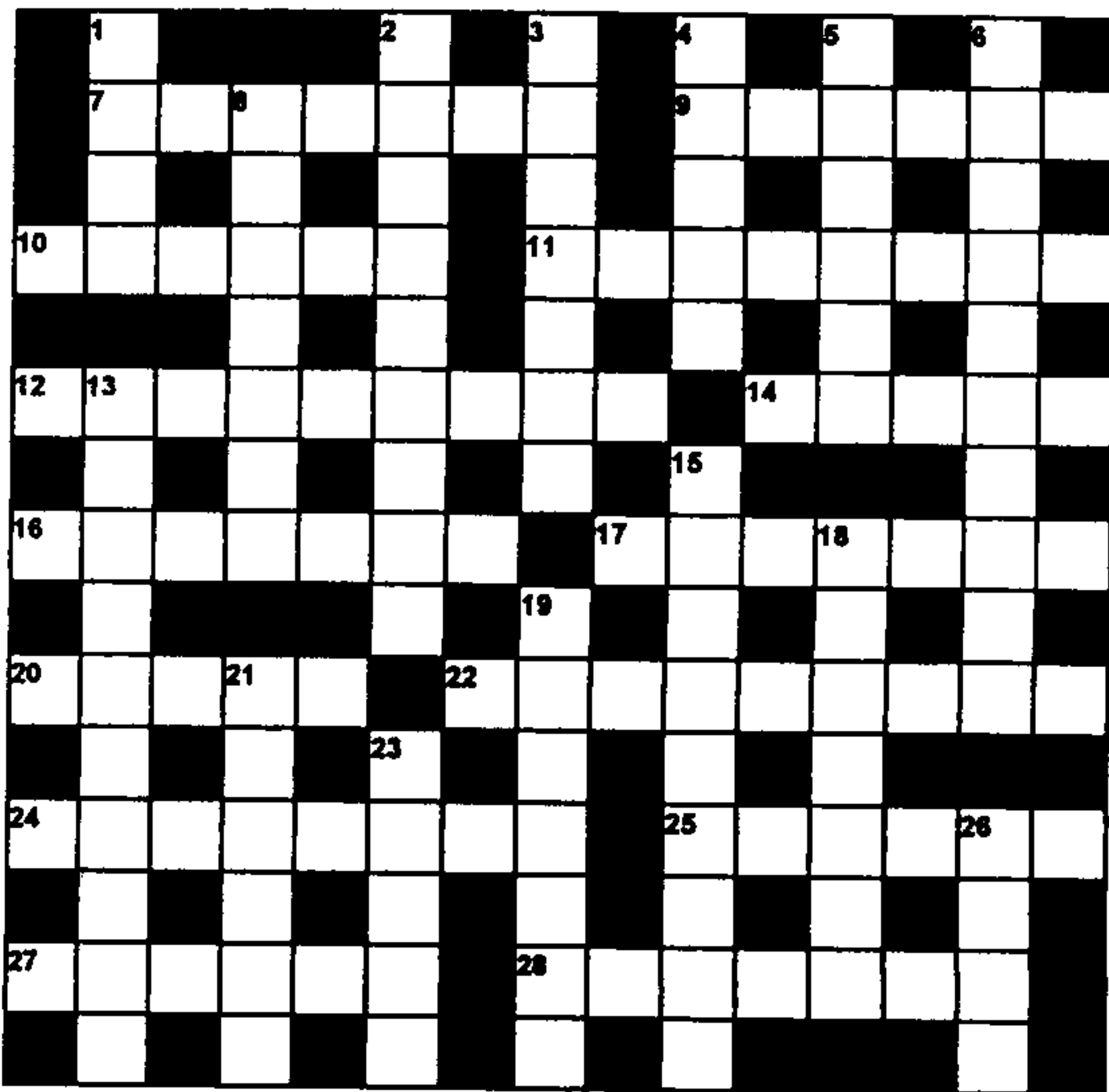


● Funny Old World — The Book. Out now, £4.99

EYE CROSSWORD 66

by Cyclops

£100 Prize



ACROSS

- 7 House secured by hooker, though not one who makes all her money from the game (4,3)
- 9 It's passé to stink, yes, my dear chap? (3,3)
- 10 Religious adherent endlessly gobbling English breakfast? (6)
- 11 Get on back in, boring English old leader! (2,6)
- 12/15 Like Cliff, reportedly carried away once more by naff tv presenter? (4-5,9)
- 14 Old banger, the sort to take Ecstasy? (1-4)
- 16 Lah-di-dah tory's first to go in to do some brown-nosing (5,2)
- 17 Plucky band that's like Blair's team but with just a hint of socialism (7)
- 20 Cloyingly sentimental material by Weldon lacking an animated character (5)
- 22 Peelers Bob once put onto drug-users (9)
- 24 Refuse the Tory rag — it's fit only for the waste bin! (4,4)
- 25 One who risks losing sight of shy Brenda? (6)
- 27 Church split about bloke's getting into S and M (6)
- 28 Bill's through being this (7)

DOWN

- 1 Rogue Saunders is not entirely a favourite son (4)
- 2 An action now regretted by hospital managers, plump with fashionable crippling disease? (6,3)
- 3 Soundly expressed disapproval — wah! — of Barbara Cartland's bedroom? (7)
- 4 (see 8)
- 5 One date on which it's fair to fiddle the accounts? (6)
- 6 Pledge to get Labour's leader in control? Not Britain these days! (5,5)
- 8/4 Where pigs ritually get together? (7,5)
- 13 Not quite with it, hacks away from their desks? (3,2,5)
- 15 (see 12)
- 18 Pledge from would-be MP, just dregs? (7)
- 19 Is there no way to stop him pursuing his new job as tv presenter? (7)
- 21 Kate, if sufficiently excited, may not need to do so (4,2)
- 23 One bitch on the up as a well-known poser (5)
- 26 Miss Blyton's not one for butts (4)

£100 prize to first correct solution opened on 22.11.96. Entries to "Crossword", Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG.

Solution to Crossword No. 65

Winner: BARRIE McDONAGH

ACROSS: 8 Disclose 9 Cohort 10/12 Thirty-five years 11 Cook 12 (see 10) 13 Under oath 15 Ingrams 17 Rushton 20 Phalluses 22 Using 25 Isle 26 Sniffer dog 27 Omega 28 Dear Bill.

DOWN: 1 Eighteen 2 Scorer 3 Tokyo 4 Reliant 5 Screwed up 6 The cloth 7 Try out 14 Ombudsman 16 Relieved 18 Own goal 19 Behinds 21 Hislop 23 Scribe 24 Ofwat.

CLINTON'S SPIN DOCTOR GIVES BLAIR TEN-POINT VICTORY PLAN

by Our Political Staff Norman Mailer on Sunday

GEORGE Stephanotalotopolis flew into London today to present Labour leader Tony Blair with a ten point plan for "Victory — the Clintstone way". These are his radical recommendations that will sweep Britain's top social-democrat into the White House.

1. Cherie to die hair blonde and put hand in till of law firm.
2. Tony to take sax lessons.
3. Tony to take sex lessons from assorted bimbos including

Gennifer Flowers.

4. Mandelson to commit suicide in mystery sleaze row.

5. Tony to be sued for sexual harassment by Clare Short.

6. Blair children to be re-christened Islington, Highbury, Barnett and Neasden.

7. Blair to run against someone useless. (*He's already got that bit. Ed.*)

8. Blair to hire myself at great expense.

9. Er...

10. That's it.

BIG FIGHT LATEST — 'Mad' Mike Beaten

by Our Man at the Ringside
Mohammed Tariq Ali

5.32 am Whitehall

IT'S the biggest upset the world of bureaucracy has ever known! The man they said could never be beaten was sent reeling with a single blow.

Heavyweight "Mad" Mike Hesseltysen had terrified all opponents for as long as anyone could remember and yet tonight he was exposed as an old, shuffling has-been — a shadow of his former cabinet self.

Boxing Wallah

The one time mace-wielding

maestro who brought "Killer" Maggie to her knees in the first round of the leadership competition, the man who fought off death in Venice, and the fighter who established himself as world number one in his regular early morning bouts with sparring partner John Humphrys, now looked merely pathetic.

Saved by Tim Bell

And who was the unlikely conqueror, the David to Hezza's Goliath?

Step forward the wily mandarin of the ring, Old Harrovian Sir Robin Butler who, with a deft centre-left centre-right combination sent the blond old Salopian Southbore crashing to the floor.

Mad Mike's usual bullying tactics availed him nothing as the Battling Butler in his trademark three-piece pinstripe shorts continued to pummel Hesseltysen with accusations of political interference with the civil (*cont. p94*)

CRISIS IN SCHOOLS



Those 250 BBC pledges in full

(continued from page one)

244. We shall provide simultaneous Hindi translation for canteen operatives and vegetarian coffee in all work stations.
245. We shall produce quality programming in all sectors at all times and in all places.
246. We shall not go into any details of the above because it isn't true.
247. We shall devote greater time to minority sports, eg angling, curling, shove-ha'penny and clay-pigeon fancying.
248. We shall devote greater broadcast time to Regional output, in particular network daytime screening for Plaid Plwydd, the Welsh Knitting Round-Up.
249. We shall provide sub-title facilities for the

hard of seeing (snooker) and talking lifts at Broadcasting House for the deaf.

250. We shall strive ever onward however difficult the obstacles in our path to provide an example to the nation of quality, excellence and endeavour by broadcasting and transmitting programmes such as Bob's Lottery Prize Draw (Saturday), Bob's Midweek Lottery Prize Draw (Wednesday) and Bob's Lottery Omnibus Edition (Sunday, repeated Monday).

The BBC is what you make it. So don't blame us because we only run it.

J. Birt

(as dictated by Tim Bell, Chief Exec Bellshit PR, Suppliers of quality Bellshit to the Conservative Party, British Airways and Friends of General Pinochet)

POETRY CORNER

In Memoriam: Marje Proops, the Doyenne of Agony Aunts

Dear Marje,
What is it
Like
Being dead?

Have you
Any advice?

These are
Questions
That even
You

Cannot answer.

By the
Way.

So.
Farewell
Then.

E.J. Throobs (17½)

Coming soon from the
world's most prolific
romantic novelist

The Baron Leaves

by **Barbara Cartland**

LOVELY young widow Raine Spencer (78) is captivated by the dashing but heartless Baron von Hardup (62). Her mother, the wise, beautiful, young 93-year-old novelist with the body of a 16 year old, warns her daughter of the perils of the match.

"He is nothing but a worthless adventurer trying to cash in on someone's wealth and fortune," she says.

"That's why we're so well suited," Raine counters.

In the end her mother's words come back to haunt her as the wicked Baron shows his darker side...

Pills and Booze

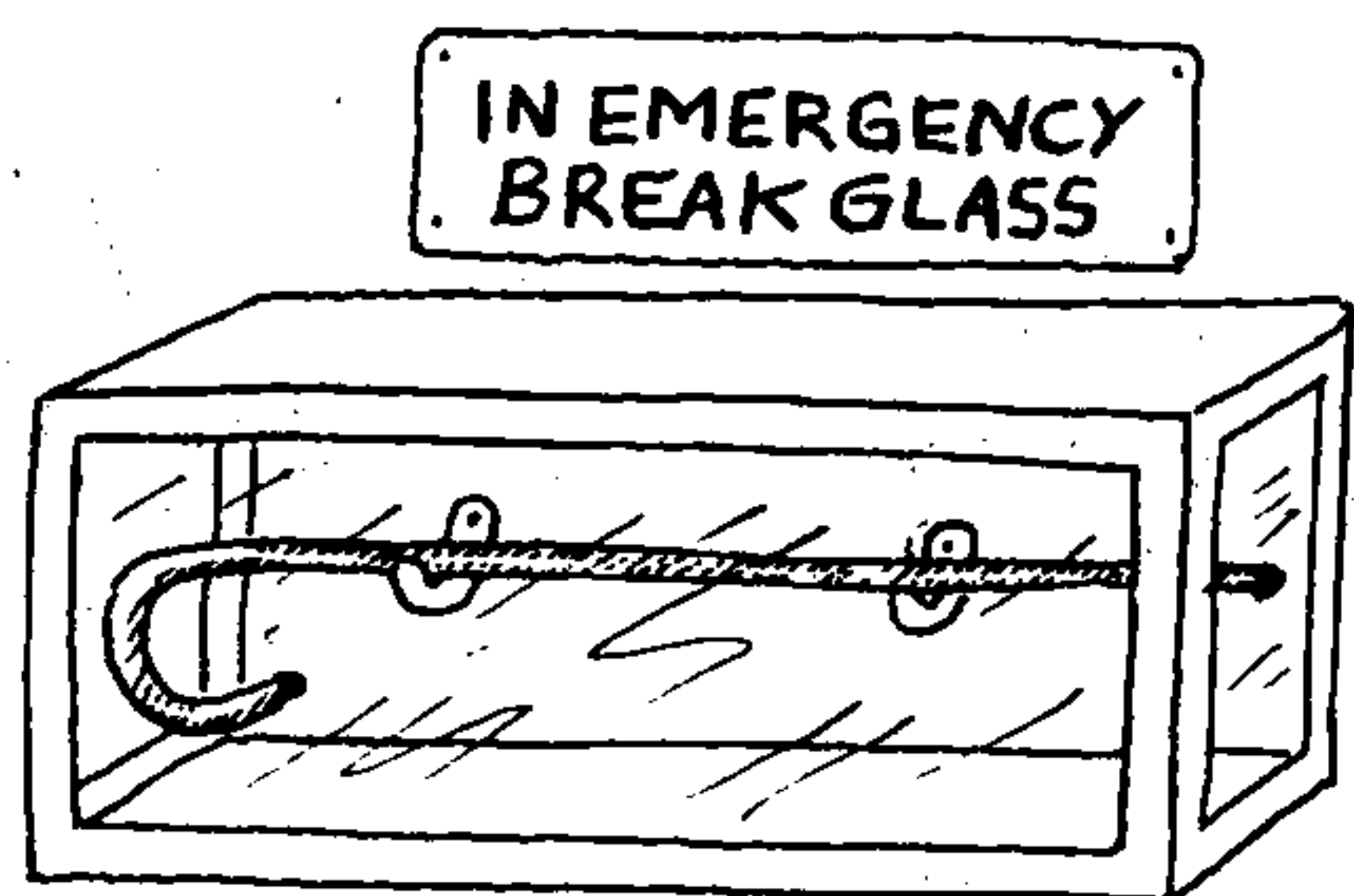
(surely 'Mills and Boon'? Ed.)

Romantic Fiction At Its Worst

The Secret DAIRY OF JOHN MAJOR aged 47 $\frac{3}{4}$

Monday

I was listening this morning to the Today programme, rather than Classic FM which my wife Norman usually prefers while we are eating our Kellogg's Frosted Cheeseflakes, when suddenly Mrs Shephard came on saying that we were thinking about bringing back caning in schools. I nearly choked since it is clearly agreed Cabinet policy that we are not thinking about it at all. When Mr Humphrys was rude to Mrs Shephard, as he always is, by saying "Does that mean you want to hit children, you silly little woman?" she said: "I am not ruling it out, or ruling it in." How dare she? This is my answer, when I am asked about the Single Currency. I immediately decided that I would have to administer a bit of punishment myself to Mrs Shephard, for speaking out of turn. However, when I got through to her number, there was only an answering machine which said: "Mrs Shephard is too important to talk to you at the moment. If your call is urgent, you can ascertain my mobile number by pressing hash on the keypad, followed by 07 hash star." I spent several hours speaking to a mini-cab firm in Plymouth, a Chinese take-away in Kettering and the new Stagecoach recorded timetable for buses in the Oxford area, all of which was very interesting, I have to admit, but it was not what I really wanted, which was to give a piece of my mind to Mrs Shephard. Eventually, I tracked



in Taden

her down opening a new Design Technology resources centre in one of our new and highly successful opted-out, grant-maintained City Challenge higher education facilities. "I demand an immediate retraction," I told her, "otherwise you will be caned." "I can't hear you, prime minister," she said. "It sounds as though we have a crossed line with some pervert who wants to cane me. Goodbye."

Tuesday

I am glad to say all the papers have given front-page coverage to my new initiative on cracking-down on Mrs Shephard. "Major Cracks Whip Over Naughty Gillian," said the Daily Telegraph. Many of the papers for some reason reported that I am against caning, because when I was at school my whole class was caned by Mr Feelgood, the Head of Woodwork, for not doing our fretsaw pipe-racks on time. I was therefore quite considerably irritated to read in my brother Terry's column, which I don't have time to read, that I had got the caning story wrong. He says that the reason I was caned by Mr Feelgood had nothing to do with pipe-racks, but was because I had missed an evening class due to being "round at Mrs Kieran's place".

Wednesday

Is there no end to the depths that the Labour Party will not rise to, in their desperate attempts to win the next election? Not that they are going to, oh no. One poll this week showed that Mr Blair was only 26 points ahead. This shows that the tide has turned, once and for all. But their latest totally cynical U-turn is disgusting. Mr Robin Cook has said that he will not rule out joining the Single Currency, but he will not rule it in either. He will make up his mind sometime after the next election. This is exactly what I have been saying for years, word for word. How pathetic!

Thursday

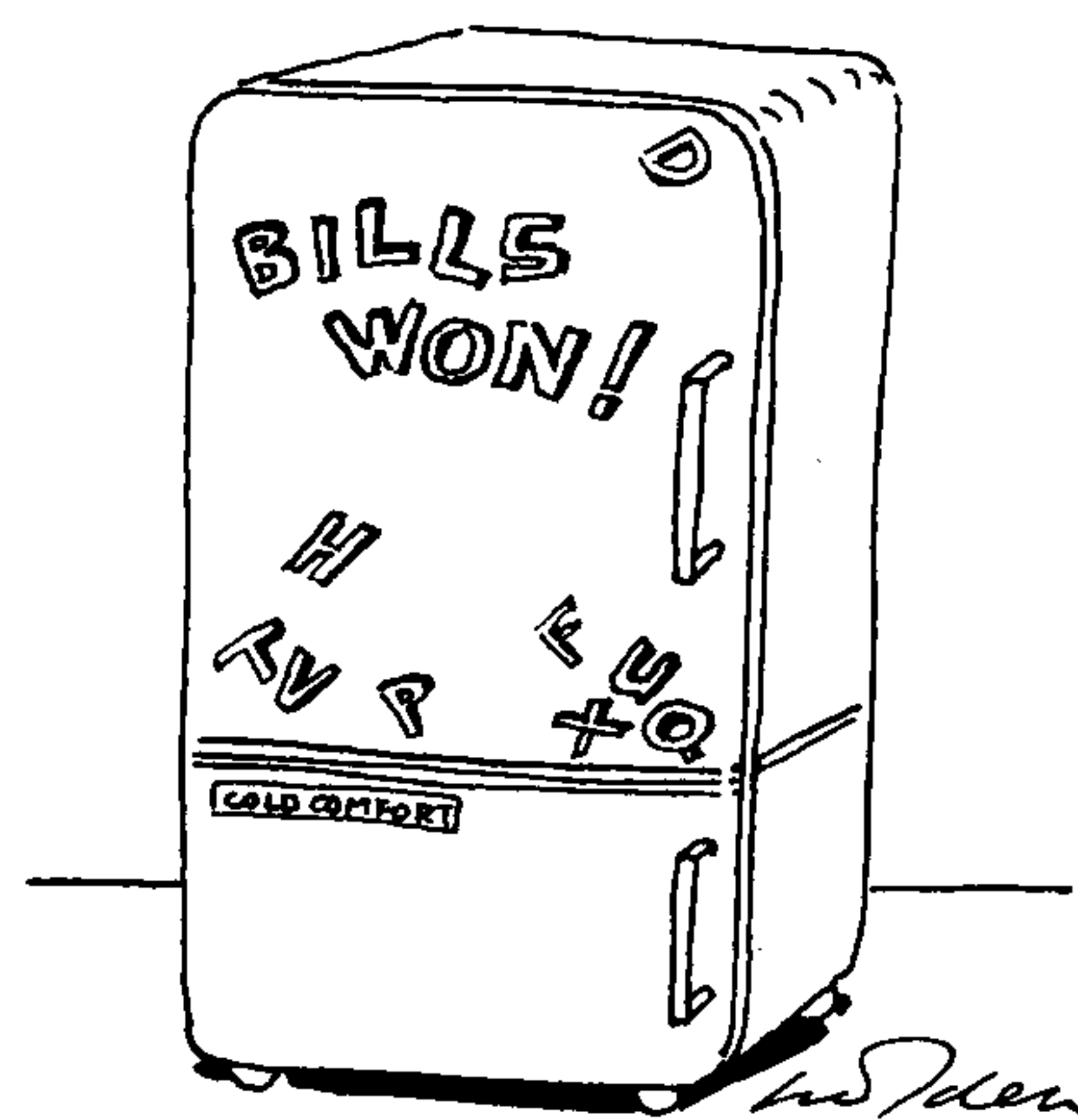
Today is a very historic day. When I got up, Norman was already watching Richard and Judy reporting from Washington on the American elections. After a very interesting recipe for Thanksgiving Blueberry Cheeseburgers, which Norman was taking down in one of her Freezer Cheeser notebooks, they announced the winner, who was Mr President Clinton.

An American man with glasses said: "This is bad news for Britain's Conservative premier, with a big swing to the young, dynamic, man of the 21st Century. Look out, John! Tony's right there behind you, ready to zap you off your pedestal." I was considerably overcome with infuriation by this very silly comment, which completely missed the point. "The point is," I said to the man with glasses on the television, "that the incumbent has won. A year ago everyone was saying that he hadn't got a chance of being re-elected, that he was totally incompetent, damaged by sleaze and personally very unpopular, and now look — he is back. The real message of the American election is that I am going to beat Mr Blair by a landslide." "I think you should go back to bed, John," said Norman. "You are still dreaming."

Friday

I was very interested to read an article by myself in this morning's Daily Telegraph. On page 20, right next to a big advert for Vodaphone, I make a number of very interesting points which I entirely agree with. In Britain we have rediscovered our zest for life. Oh yes. London is again the swinging capital of the world, just as it was when Harold Wilson won the election in 1964. Our lottery is the envy of other nations. Our Traffic Cone Line is a model for international Cone Lines and has been adopted by countries as diverse as Tibet, Saudi Arabia and Sark. Oh yes! "Zest" indeed!

My wife Norman was very impressed by my article. "I didn't know you had written something for the Telegraph," she said. "Neither did I," I replied, putting her in her place.



Saturday

Labour's Mr Brown has made an idiot of himself again. He has told everyone that he comes from a successful family of businessmen and businesswomen. But oh no!

His mother, who is also called Brown, has given the game away saying that Brown's father was a Scottish vicar and she herself only helped him type out his sermons!

What a contrast to my own background! My father was a highly successful Garden Ornament manufacturer who ran a thriving business from his shed before he went bankrupt. (This was due entirely, by the way, to the lack of "zest" in the country at the time and also to the failure of my brother Terry to be sufficiently supportive in the painting department i.e. putting the wrong coloured dots on the toadstools, thus precipitating a number of complaints from our main customer, The Akehurst Garden Centre, Didcot.)

Sunday

I am not inconsiderably apoplectic with rage over the European decision to make us observe a 48-hour working week. "Where would this country be?" I asked Norman, "if I only worked 48 hours a week?"

"Much better off," she replied, zestfully.



Is It All Over For The Street?

Asks **Dame Antonia Holden-Guest**, authoress of *Aren't The Royals Awful?* and other deeply important historical and literary works.

FEARS are growing that the world's longest-running soap opera, *The Royals*, otherwise known as *Coronation Street*, may soon be off the air. Since the loss of two of the most popular characters ever to appear in the series, the public have switched off in millions.

Good Queen Bet

The biggest blow to the show, which regularly used to occupy the nation's No. 1 slot, came when blonde bombshell Di Spencer stormed off the set, saying she could no longer work with the rest of the cast.

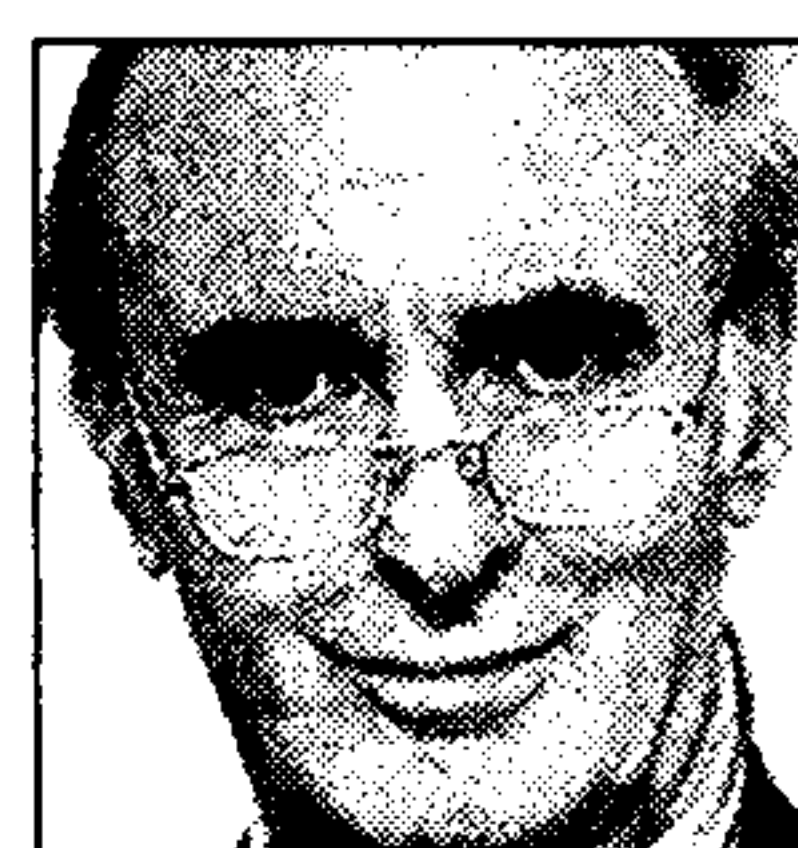
She described her on-screen husband Charlie Windsor as "a boring wimp who is not star material".

If that wasn't bad enough, the fun-loving redhead Fergie, who provided comic relief with her raunchy love romps on the Riviera and visits to a zany clairvoyant Madame Baillivasso, also decided to quit, to write her no-holds

barred memoirs of life behind the cameras.

Queena Sharples

But a spokesman for the show last night said: "We still have our trump card in the Queen Mum. Although she doesn't appear as often as she used to, so long as she is still there in the corner of the Clarence Arms knocking back the G&Ts, we will still hold on to our 17 million viewers".



MEDICAL BRIEFING

Dr Thomas Stuttaford

ASHDOWN DEMANDS 'EQUAL HAIRTIME'

by Our Financial Times Political Staff
Vidal Buffoon

THE leader of the Liberal Democratic Party reacted furiously last night to the widespread coverage in the media of Tony Blair's new hairstyle.

"This is straightforward bias and must be rectified immediately," he said. "The press has focused exclusively on the Labour leader's 'flattened-chestnut-bouffant' cut and the Conservative leader's contrasting 'grey-short-back-and-sides'."

No FT No Sensible Comment

Mr Ashblonde continued: "The electorate of this country has a right to know about *my* hair policy as well. As leader of the

third largest political party which gets over 10% of the national vote, my 'military-style-crop' is every bit as important as the tired old hair of the other washed-out parties."

Follicle Times

"Only with proportional representation," he concluded "will this country get the hairstyle it deserves in Number Ten Downing Street. Until then we're all doomed to the dreary old two-parting system."

Mr Tony Hair is 42.

IN THE OTHER PAPERS

Tony Blair Hair Shock

Financial Times

Blair Loses Hair Grip

The Daily Telegraph

Major's Perm Sets Tone

The Times

Blair Today, Gone Tomorrow

The Guardian

Labour's Bad Blair Day

The Independent

Will Labour Sign Up To A Single European Currency Or Will They Use The Maastricht Convergence Criteria As A Delaying Tactic To Prevent Wholesale Monetary Union?

Hairdressing Weekly

Is Gin Good For You?

IT IS surely no coincidence that the world's longest-lived great-grandmother, the Queen Mother, is also known for her regular consumption of enormous quantities of gin.

A recent article in the BMJ establishes a causal link between longevity in elderly members of the Royal Family and an above average intake of gin and tonic.

Thus there appears to be evidence that in certain cases (*contd* p. 94)

Since Frances Lawrence launched her manifesto for an ethical renaissance in this newspaper,

The Times

Noble

Lords may disagree but the fact of the matter is that so far as concerns the English Cox, size matters.

Lord Lucas, House of Lords Hansard

GAZZA'S SOCK'ER TIPS Part 94: How to beat your wife (surely 'the goalkeeper'? Ed)

1. CONTROL

Drink 20 pints of lager and lose it completely.



2. TACKLING

Tackle someone female and weak about an imaginary slight.



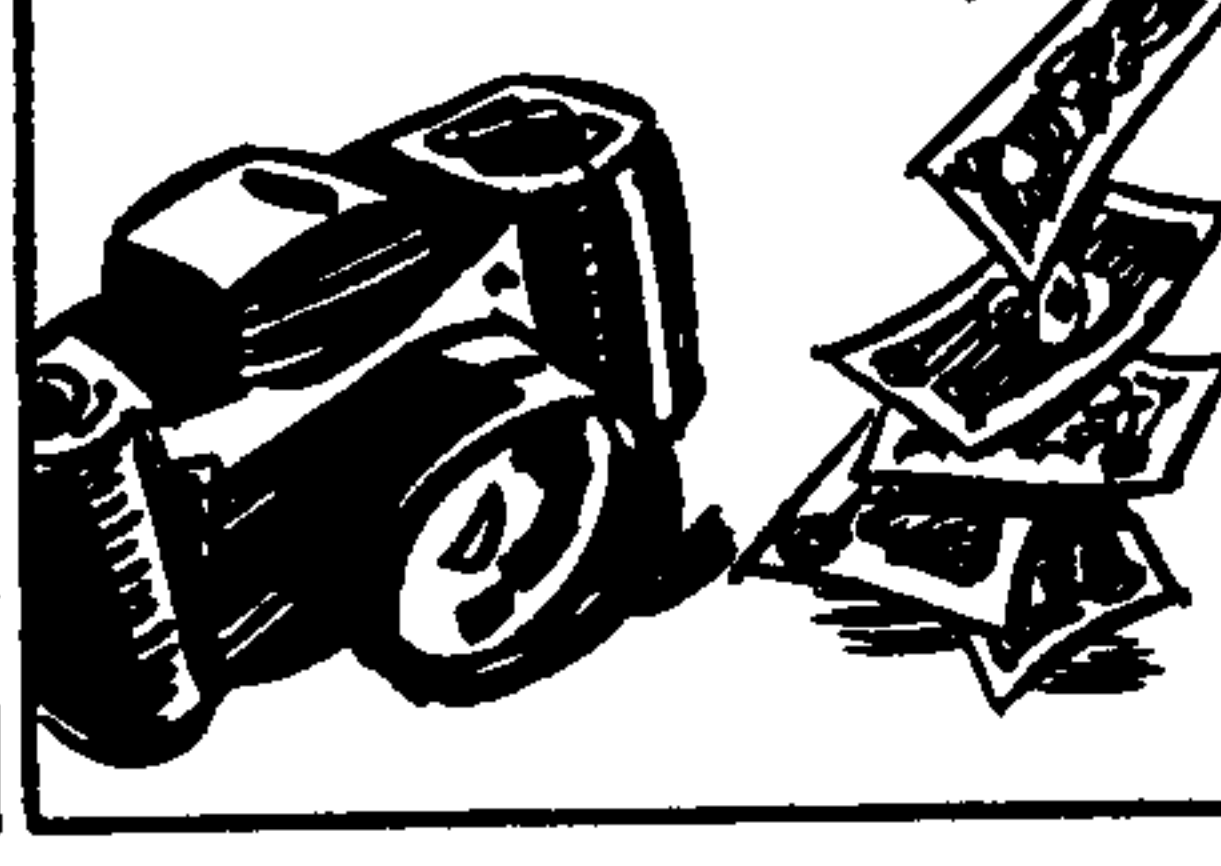
3. FOOTWORK

Don't forget to use your feet as well as your hands and your head. A good kicking needs all your skills.



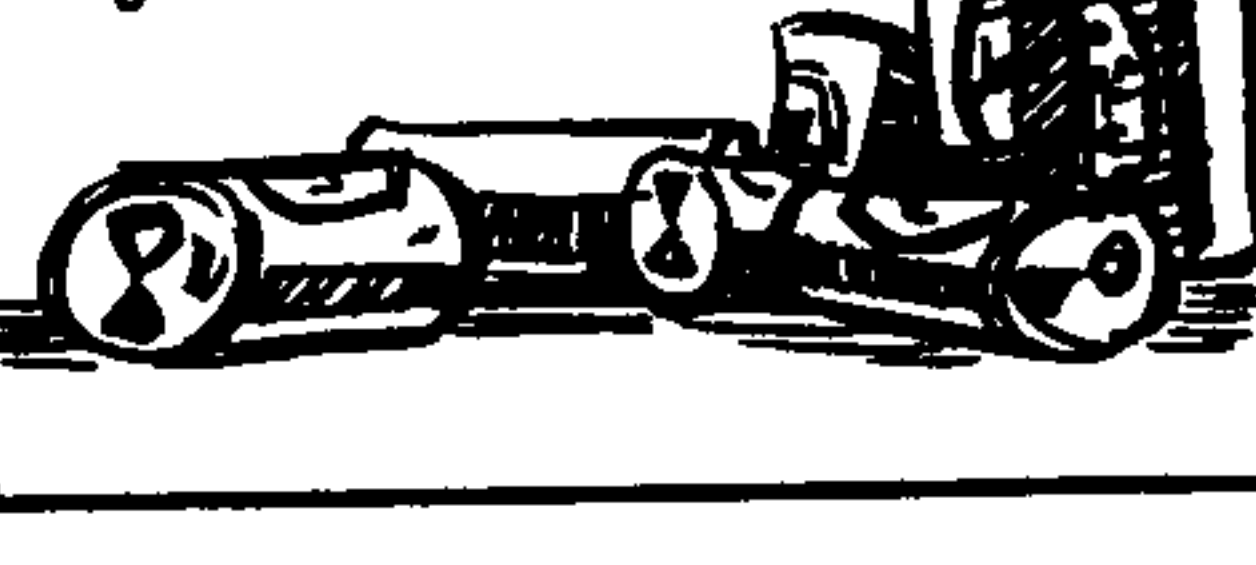
4. BALANCE.

Remember your bank balance and apologise to the press afterwards.



5. DRIBBLING

Give a press conference and dribble on about guilt, shame, remorse, counselling, therapy, and getting your place in the England team back.



NEXT WEEK: Boycott's Guide to Opening the Beating.

60 Glorious Years Of Ourselves

Now it's *your* chance to vote for Auntie's All-Time Greats. Just select the best broadcasters and programmes of the past 60 years from the following categories:

1. Best Comedy Series Ever

- a) Men Behaving Badly
- b) Men Behaving Badly
- c) Men Behaving Badly

2. Best Current Affairs Presenter Of All Time

- a) Desmond Lynam
- b) Des Lynam
- c) Des (Lynam)

3. Best Drama Series In History Of Universe

- a) Pride and Prejudice
- b) Pride and Prejudice
- c) Pride and Prejudice

4. Best Victoria Wood Ever

- a) Victoria Wood
- b) Victoria Wood (Live)
- c) Michael Fish (*shurely* 'Victoria Wood'? Ed)

5. Finest-Ever Director-General In History Of BBC Responsible For Above Utterly Brilliant Best-Ever Programmes

- a) J. Birt
- b) Sir J. Birt
- c) Lord Birt of Speak

Phone in your entry now and you could win a letter of your choice to be read out on the award-winning *Points Of View* by TV's Anne Robinson, winner of the Greatest-Ever Reader-Out Of Letters On TV Award. Or you could receive a copy of the BBC's new glossy brochure of 250 Pledges, including No. 94: "We promise not to waste licence-payers' money on worthless, self-serving PR rubbish rather than make programmes."



MEDICAL BRIEFING

Dr Thomas Stuttaford

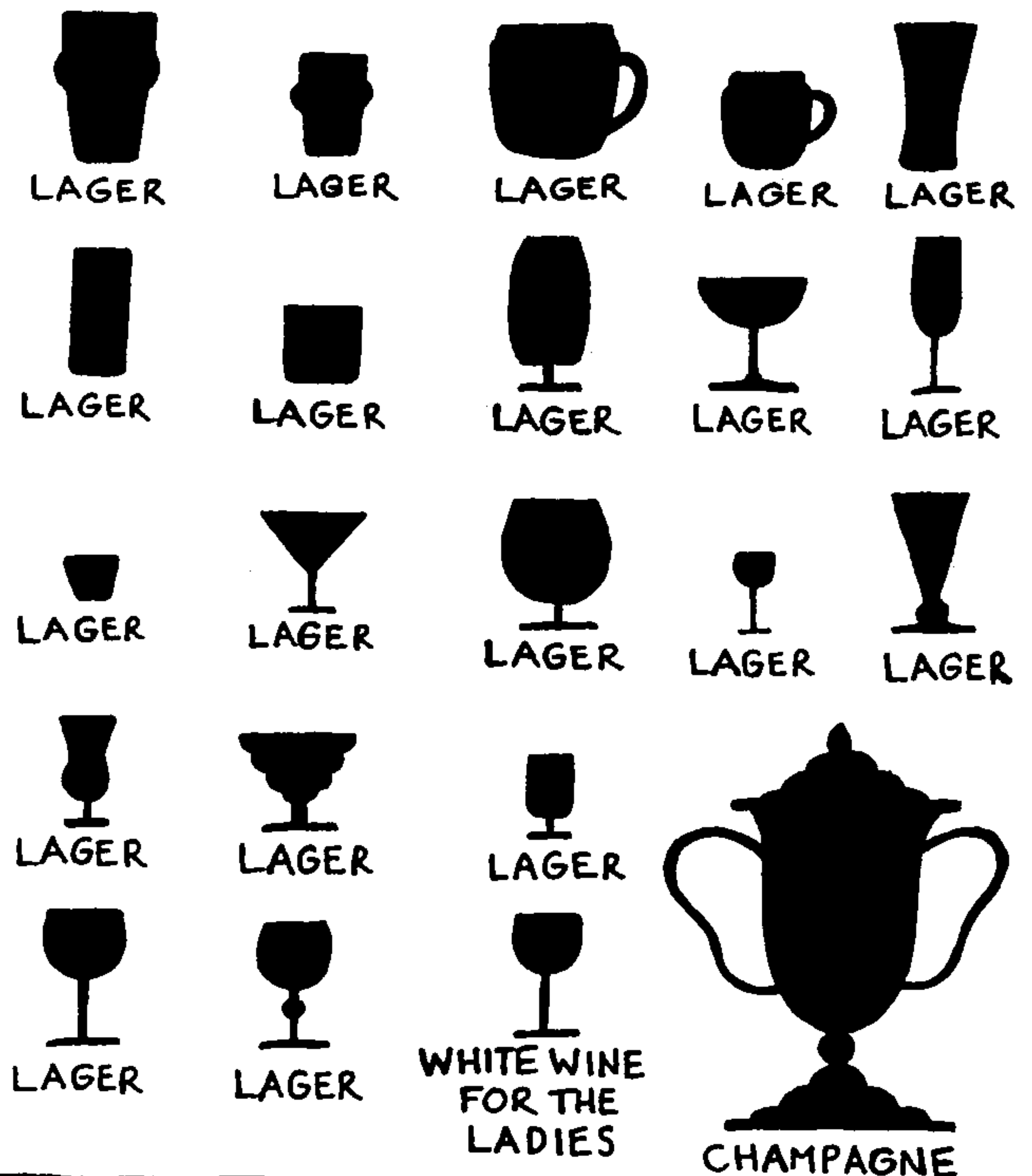
Can Watching BBC Awards Programmes Lead To Death?

A RECENT survey has shown an alarming link between heart disease and the watching of BBC awards programmes. A colleague tells me of a recent case where a married couple were watching (*cont p. 94*)

Apparently ...

BY MIKE BARFIELD

PREMIER LEAGUE GLASSWARE GUIDE



LONG-DISTANCE RECORD HOLDER ADMITS 'I CHEATED'

by Ffyona Campbell-Soap

A BLONDE woman who claimed the world record for walking all over everybody has confessed in a new book that she "cheated" in one section of her marathon endeavour.

Mmargaret Thatcher tells how after going round in circles for a decade she was tempted to hitch a ride with the Europeans and "got

onboard" the EC bandwagon whilst no one was looking.

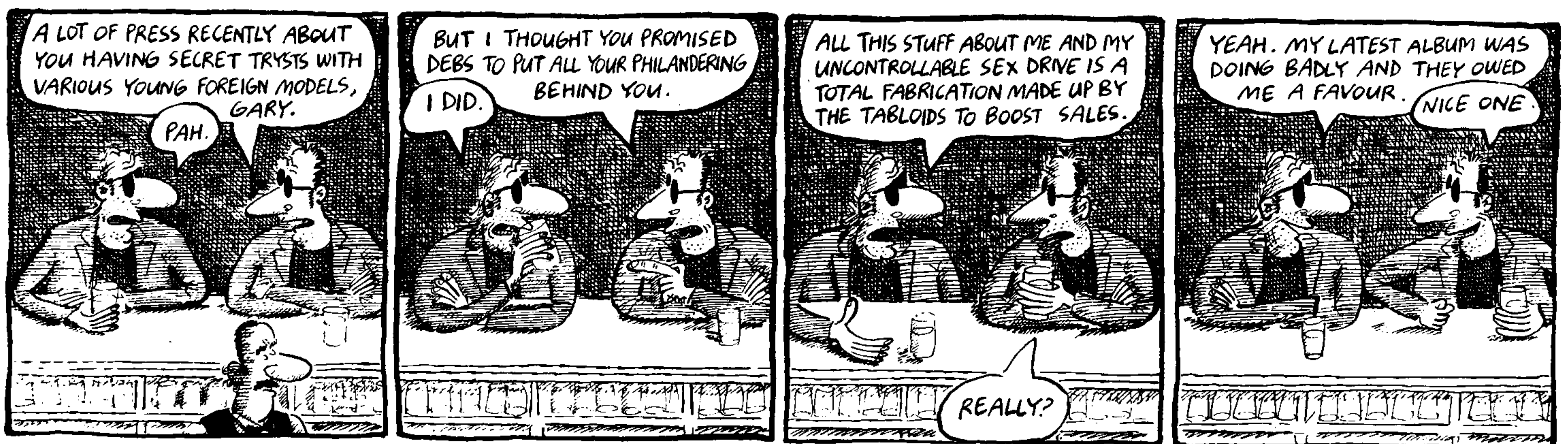
She subsequently covered up her lapses and pretended that she had done no such thing and had gone her own way all along.

But now she has been found out and says: "I could not live with myself anymore and nor could anyone else which is why they sacked me."

Mmargaret is 94.

Celeb

LIGGER



THAT CLINTSTONE ACCEPTANCE SPEECH IN FULL

Mah fellow Americans [takes out huge bag of onions]. This is a great day for Hillary, Chelsea and I. We stand before you, in the presence of God, to give thanks for our own humility in the face of this overwhelming victory for myself. We have won that gunfight at the OK Corral. We have crossed the Alamo into the 21st century. Together, we have gone boldly where no man has gone before. We have made that bridge in Madison County. We have built that bridge over troubled waters. We have gone a bridge too far. So help us God. So let us go forward on the highway of hope. Route 66, where I get my kicks. Yes, sirree. That old deadwood stage is a-comin' on over the hill. And the corn is as high as an elephant's eye. Oh, say, can't you see, by the dawn's early light. Yabbadabbadole...

Robert Hughes writes: In this already legendary acceptance speech of 1996, William Jefferson Airhead Clintstone evokes the pioneering ethos of revolutionary America which we saw in this early landscape by the little-known Virginian painter Ezekiel Hackenbusch, who emigrated from Belgium in the closing years of the 18th century. This naive, almost crude Australian (contd. for 94 weeks on BBC2)

ADVERTISEMENT

It's so easy!!!

Just pop out of the House of Commons, put out your hand and hop on a bus company! Hey presto! Within seconds you're on your way to becoming a millionaire!

Steve Norris says: "It's as easy as hopping on a bird! One minute I was in charge of bus deregulation: the next minute I was running the buses! All on the board! Hold on tight to your money, because I'm trying to get it. Next stop the bank!"



Issued by The Capitalist Bus Co. plc
(Prop. S. Norris MP)



AMAZING ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIND IN ALEXANDRIA HARBOUR

by Our Underwater Staff
The Marquis of Bathysphere

DIVERS today announced incredible finds 30 feet below the oily waters of Alexandria Harbour.

"It is like a whole city down there," said top French archaeologist Professor Pierre McAquis. "We could not believe our eyes. There are palaces, streets, temples, world-famous department stores — all made out of what look like bundles of magazines."

"What we believe we have found is the legendary Lost Kingdom of Fayed."

The sensational find may have answered one of the greatest mysteries of the late 20th century — what on earth do they do with the millions of unsold copies of Punch magazine?

Another French diver, Alexandra Chancellor, said:



"Some people might think that we'd just tipped all these old copies in the sea. They are right."

ON OTHER PAGES

Did the Great Library of Alexandria only contain copies of Punch, and was that why they burnt it down? 8

What did they use to fuel the Pharos, the world's most famous lighthouse? 10

Can Snake Bites Be Fatal?

THE death of Cleopatra reminds us that snake poison can be harmful to human beings, particularly if administered by a snake. The condition is known to the medical profession as *Serpentine toxicosis*, or 'Snake-bite' for short. Most British snakes are perfectly harmless, but some varieties of Egyptian snake are (cont p. 94)



MEDICAL BRIEFING

Dr Thomas
Stuttford

SUPERMODELS

KERBER



EMPEROR BOGAZZA DEAD

by Our Man in the Congo
King Conga

Gazzaville, Tuesday
ONE OF the most unpleasant
and violent men of the
twentieth century, the Em-

peror Bogazza, has died at the
age of 28.

His short and brutal career
was marked by a series of bestial
acts culminating in a ferocious
attack on his wife, the Empress
Shezza.

Bogazza, a man of humble
birth on the River N'Tyne, came
to believe he was all-powerful and
indestructible. He dressed in
leopard-skin suits, dyed his hair
yellow and would strike out in
drunken rages at anybody who
came near him. In the end he
believed he was God and lived
(cont. p.94)

OTHER DEATHS

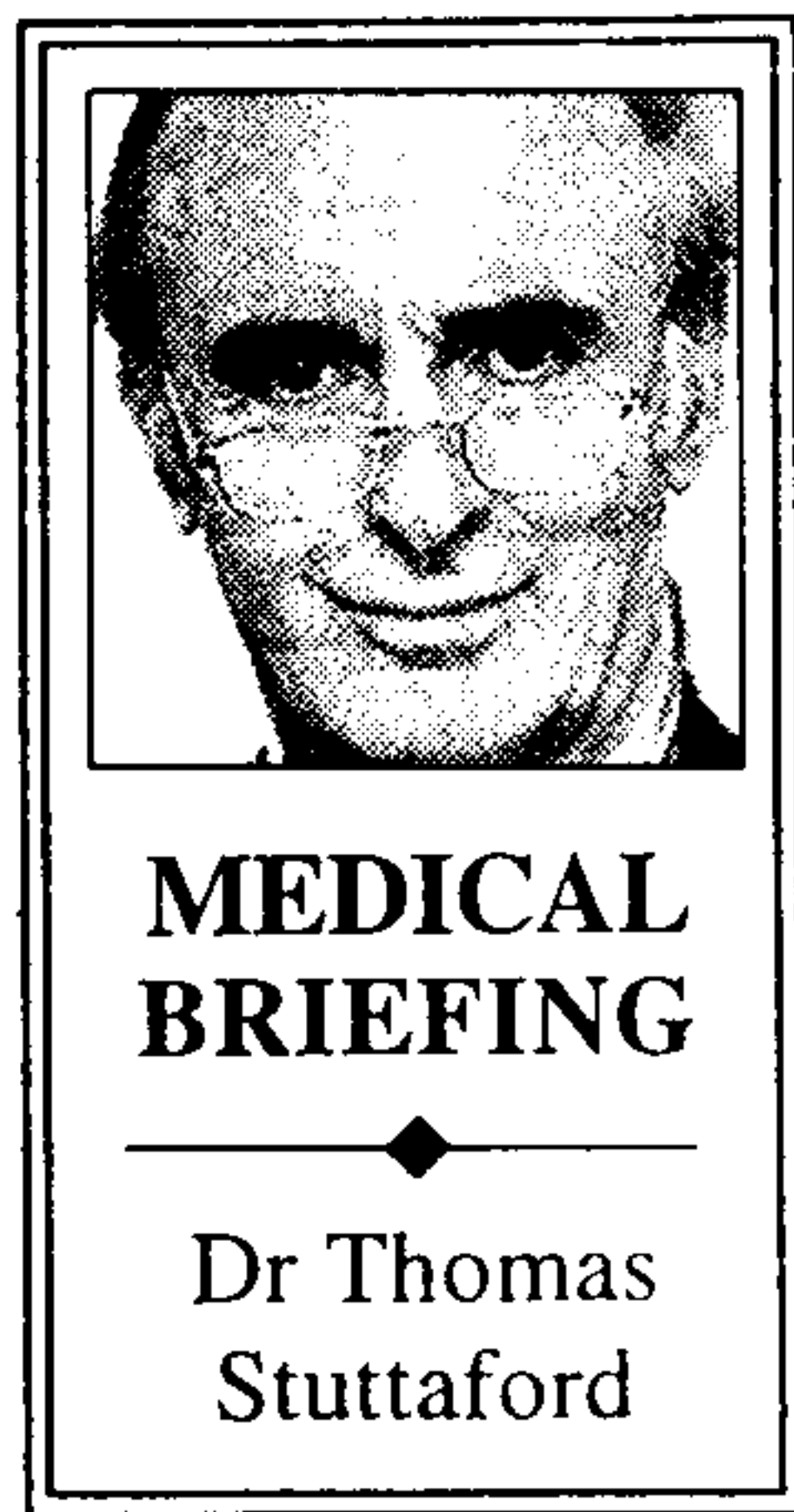
TOMMY LAWTON, Footballer
and Gentleman.



Deirdre Spart, Co-Chair of the
Lesbian Feminist Alternative
Committee of Selectors of the
England Football Team

IT IS totally sickening to my
mind the way the England
capitalist soccer bosses have
once again totally condoned
the patriarchal violence
perpetrated by so-called
Gazza against his partner
thereby endorsing the
pathological woman-hater
Gascoigne as a role model for
millions of infantile so-called
men whose only emotional
response is one of systematic
brutalised Fascist repression-
ism against all women thus
once again proving that
soccer is not a genuine
working-class cultural-artefact
but a tool of capitalist

masculinism as Julie Burchill
has written in her seminal
classic *Scoring Girls* published
by the Ravendyke Press which
should be made compulsory
reading for all schools
(cont p. 94)



Does Football Lead To Violence?

A RECENT article in *The
Lancet* draws attention to an
apparently alarming link between
the game of Association Football
and incidents of (cont p. 94)



"Outrageous they want us all in uniform!"

ADVERTISEMENT



She Needs Your Help

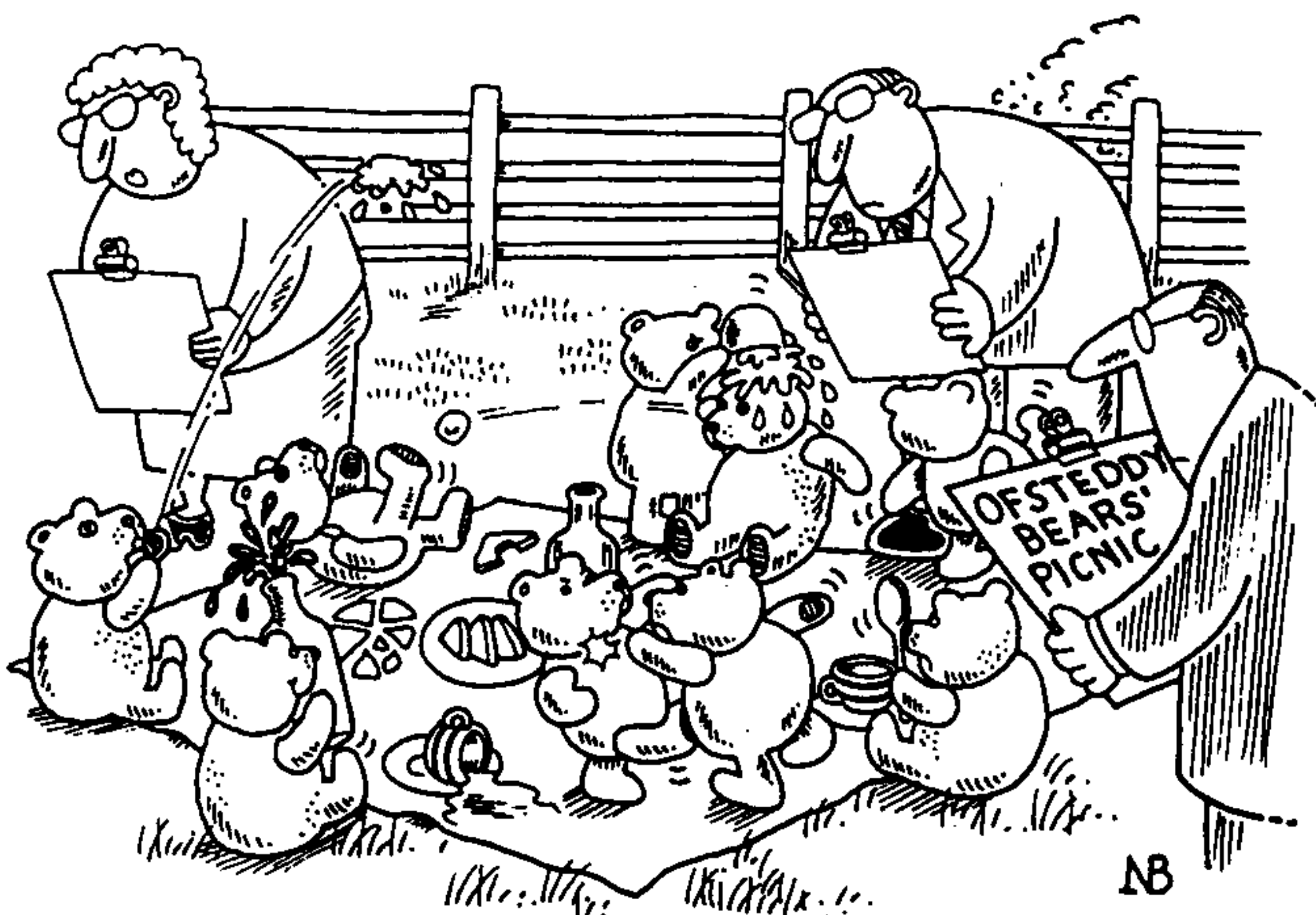
AS Christmas approaches and the season of
goodwill descends on us once more, let us
all spare a thought for those less fortunate
than ourselves.

Fergie is an unemployed mother of two
who at the age of 37 is destitute. She is £4
million in debt, through no fault of yours, and
she has tried everything to get some form of
income without having to do anything. Hers
is a pitiful tale.

She has sucked men's toes, written bad
books, appeared in *Hello!* magazine and
advertised cameras on American television.
She has even been reduced to borrowing
children's stories and trying to sell them.

Please, please, please give generously to
Fergie this Christmas. Without your help she
will end up as a Royal centrefold in *Playboy*.
Spare her and yourself this.

Send to: FERGIE IN NEED, Box 7394, Dallas.



From The Referendum Bunker

Bulletin No. 94

Achtung!



So, Mr Major-Bond. You are so unimportant that I can't be bothered to talk to you today.

Instead I commend to you the enclosed cassette of my recent historic 12-hour-long phone-in on the most important radio station in Britain today - Talk Neasden Radio FM 376 KHz.

Caller: Hello, Sir Fishpaste. It's Michelle from Streatham. What exactly is this Referendum Party you're on about? I mean, is it something to do with Europe or goldfish or something?

Sir Jams: Enough of your stupid questions! Listen to me, you fools. I am Sir Ernst Blofish, the head of Smersh The Tories, the new political party which is going to conquer the world in the name of democracy. But we are not after power. Oh no. My only aim is to give ordinary little people like you a voice. The chance to speak...

Caller: But surely...

Sir Jams: Shut up, you snivelling creature! Next caller...

2nd caller: This is Reg from Leamington. I've been following your party with some interest, and it seems to me that your problem is that you don't know

the question you're going to ask people in this referendum of yours.

Sir Jams: How dare you speak to me like that! It is not for me to choose the question. That is up to you.

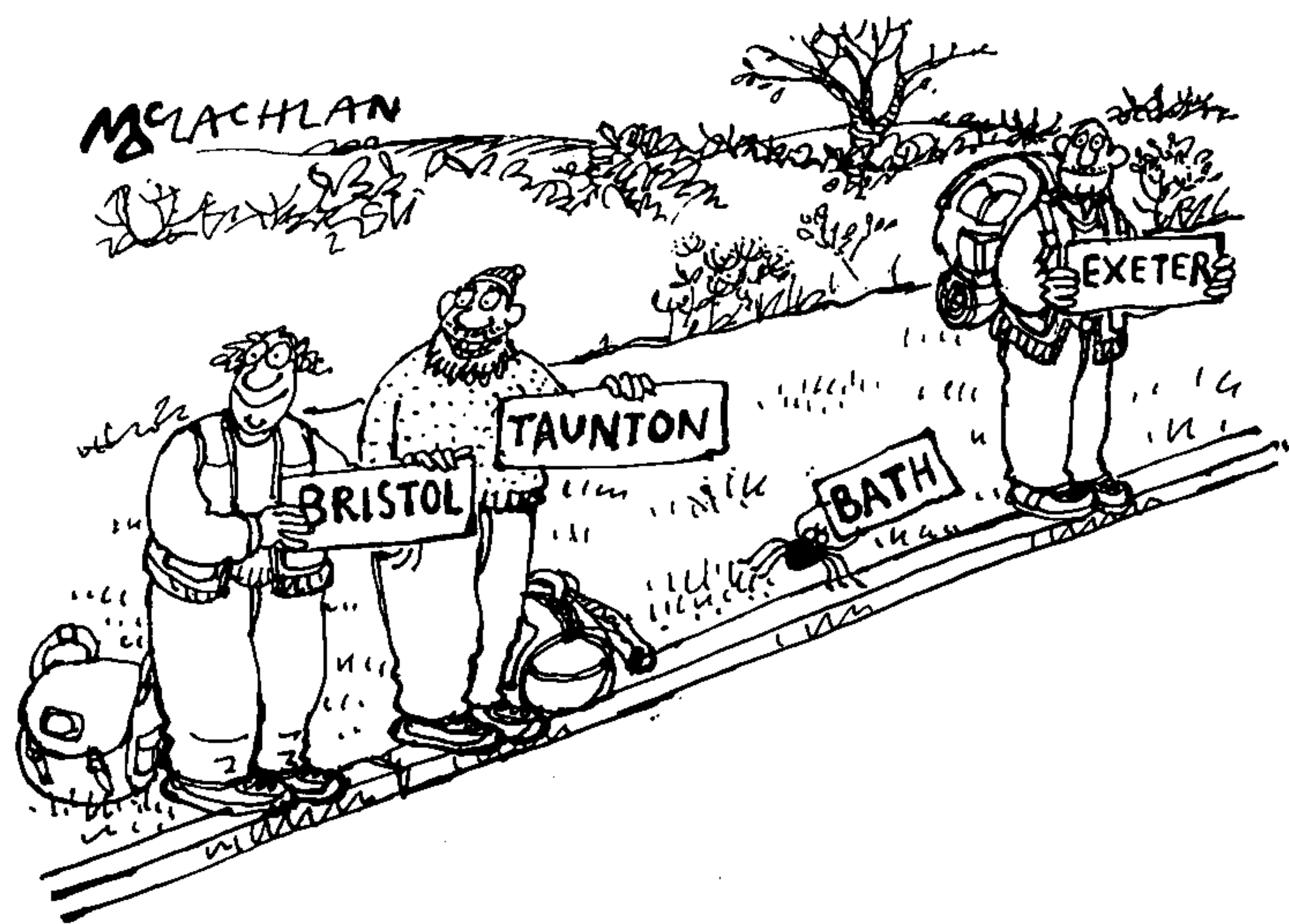
2nd caller: Well, what I think the question should be is...

Sir Jams: Shut up! No one is interested in your opinion, you pathetic worm. Next question.

3rd caller: Hello Jeemy. It is I, Yassou, a poor little Greek boy from Hackney. I want to say you are like Sir Winston Churchill. The greatest Englishman that ever lived. You getta my vote every day, boss.

Sir Jams: Thank you for ringing up, Taki, like I told you to. Now, no more questions. I am a busy man.

(Strokes white fur microphone and throws producer into portable piranha tank lent for the occasion by the John Aspinall Zulus 'n' Piranhas 'R Us Experience. Deputy producer has to fill up rest of 12-hour programme with recordings of hit theme tune from 'You Only Vote Once' sung by sultry Italian songstress Carla Powelotti)



SCOTT PROMISES TO REACH THE POLL

by Our Antarctic Staff
Jon Snowstorm and David Frostbite

BRITAIN's most famous Exminister (surely 'explorer'? Ed) vowed last night to press on all the way to the Poll in May despite the insurmountable obstacles in his path.

"I will crawl there if I have to," he promised his back-up team at the Kensington and Chelsea base camp, "and, knowing me, I probably will."

Sir Nicholas Scotch faces overwhelming odds in reaching

his goal. For a start, he can barely stand up — but, worse than that, he faces a hostile climate in the press and an icy reception in his own party.

Campaign-Killers

"Physically I am up to the challenge," he said. "I've had a bit of a cold shoulder recently and there is a recurring problem with a couple of fingers (of whisky), but with the aid of a bottle of 12-year-old single Highland medication I should be able to stagger all the way there."

His final words to his disloyal team of helpers will probably go down in history.

"I'm just going out of politics now, I may be some time."

Sir Nicholas Scott cannot remember how old he is.

TV Highlights

BBC 10.10 Billy Connolly's World Ego Trip

THE Scottish comedian tours round his own vast head in an expensive eight-part series, combining footage of Connolly talking about himself on stage and footage of Connolly talking about himself against various irrelevant landscapes.

Warning: This programme contains stories which some viewers may have heard before as well as material which they may consider offensively stupid and ill-informed.

ITV (various times) **The News**
ONE of television's oldest soaps which is now under fire from TV bosses for its "lack of sex". Said one chief of the flagship seven-day-a-week serial: "The News is boring, its storylines are too predictable. Where is the teenage sex angst, the cliff-hanger infidelities and the hitman trying to kill someone's estranged husband because of a ménage-à-trois situation gone wrong scenario?"

BBC 9.00 Panorama

A LEADING figure in the Revenue is involved in a tax and bribe scandal. Where did the money come from? Panorama looks at Kenneth Clarke, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and accusations that he tried to buy off the public with sums as large as one penny in the pound.



DIARY

Fergie: In those blissful early days, the public took me to their heart and Lovely Bubbly Fergie could do no wrong. My husband Andrew was a great-looking hunk with a blinding smile — and the Sovereign's second son to boot! We both knew the same idiot jokes — and we both loved a good prank!

In many respects, I was just the Ordinary Bubbly Girl from Clapham, but I think it was my ability to do great big "let-offs" that first attracted Andrew to me. "He who smelt it, dealt it!" I would joke to him, as he reeled around the room with a clothes-peg clipped onto his nose! "She who denied it, supplied it!" he would retort — and we would both collapse in complete giggles!

But what I called my fun-farts — and I was the very bestest blower off in the whole family — began to attract the barely-veiled hostility of the Royal Household, the snooty couriers who run the show. It was in 1989, at a State Dinner at Buckingham Palace for King Juan Carlos of Spain that it all came to a head. "Quiet everybody!" I hooted over coffee through a mass of giggles, "I've got an absolute corker coming!" I then stood up, raised my gorgeous Emmanuel ballgown and — PHAAAAFFF! — let out the most almighty royal raspberry!

I could tell that Her Majesty thought it was the most tremendous fun — she always signalled her lasting love and trust in me by putting on a joke frown, garumphing and turning her back towards me! But the snooty couriers turned up their noses. I was too natural, friendly and easygoing for Palace life. For them, I was no longer a breath of fresh air. The wind was turning against me.

Allan Starkie: It was around this time that my business partner John Bryan came up with what he saw as an overall marketing strategy to secure a strong financial future for the Duchess and himself. In bed with Fergie, he beeped down to Andrew and asked him to fix them both a light breakfast while he outlined his strategy. Together, he said, they were to set up a limited liability trading company, "Yorkophart International": it would be the key to their future.

"Can't you see? Oh, Gaad, it's your greatest asset and it's sitting there right behind you and you're saying you still can't see it?" he bellowed at her as I quietly took out my notebook, "We bottle 'em in an offshore factory, and ship 'em around the ****ing world! Can't you see it? The public would pay a ****ing fortune for your



FERGIE AND FRIENDS

Royal farts! You're sitting on a ****ing goldmine!"

"Coffee and croissants, anyone?" It was Andrew popping his head round the door with the breakfast tray. "Leave it on the bed and then give us some goddamn peace, man!" said Bryan. Andrew gave the three of us a thumbs-up sign before creeping away, ever the gentleman. I felt nervous for Sarah, nervous lest she was surrounding herself with people like Bryan who might prove untrustworthy. I determined to help her by voicing my disquiet in my book.

Why am I writing this?

My only wish is to help my associate, The Duchess of York.

Major Ron: For generations, the Fergusons have come of good farting stock, and this is what has endeared us to the British public. Unlike some I could mention, we Fergusons had no need of a throne. Family legend has it you could sniff great-great-grandfather Ferguson ten miles away. For him, the answer really was, as the old song has it, blowing in the wind. And Great Granny "Pooper" Ferguson was equally distinguished in the field — and in the home too.

When I heard of Sarah's new business enterprise, I was onto the blower at once.

"I'm already hard at work, Dads!" she enthused, emitting all her natural charm. The background noises confirmed her dedication.

"Don't do anything I wouldn't do, old girl!" I advised her. I was appearing as Widow Twankey in a prestigious new production of Mother Goose at the time, and had no wish to see the family dignity compromised. But Sarah informed me that, at £12.50 a bottle, Yorkophart International was destined to place the monar-

chy on a new financial footing.

As a lifelong patriot and with an ingrained sense of duty, I straightaway ordered a stock of bottles and began the long and dignified process of bottling my own. My only thought was for those ordinary, decent members of the general public who had for so long wanted to purchase Good Old Major Ron's Bottled Flatulence — and the worldwide network of charities, if any, that might benefit as a result.

Why am I writing this?

My only wish is to help my daughter, the Duchess of York.

Vasso Kortesis: Whenever we did a reading, Sarah would confide in me: "Oh, Vasso, lovely Vasso, you are the only one I can trust!" Call it intuition, call it psychic powers, but at that point I would always know to reach under the table and switch on the tape-recorder.

Sarah would quiz me about her future. By now, she said, she had a whole warehouse full of crates of The Duchess of York's Very Own Wind. Harrods had already expressed interest, and there was a major American deal in the offing. "Oh, Vasso," she said. "Will this bring the potatoes in?" Clearing my mind and concentrating hard on the cards laid out on the small wooden table, I told Sarah that she was married to a man whose christian name began with an A and had two young daughters by him. Not for the first time, she was amazed at my accuracy. She was beginning to trust me. "But what about the chips, the big potatoes, Vasso?" she asked, insistently. "Will all my farting be rewarded? Will it sell like hot cakes?" I studied the cards once more. "The cards tell me that the only sure way for you to make money," I said "is to empty your purse into my caring hands."

We spoke in numbered codes — 1, 2, 3 — of her different men friends. "Oh, Vasso," she said, "I'm so worried about 86." I told her that I thought 15, 27, 54 and 92 were seeing other women. She burst into tears, desperately upset by their infidelity.

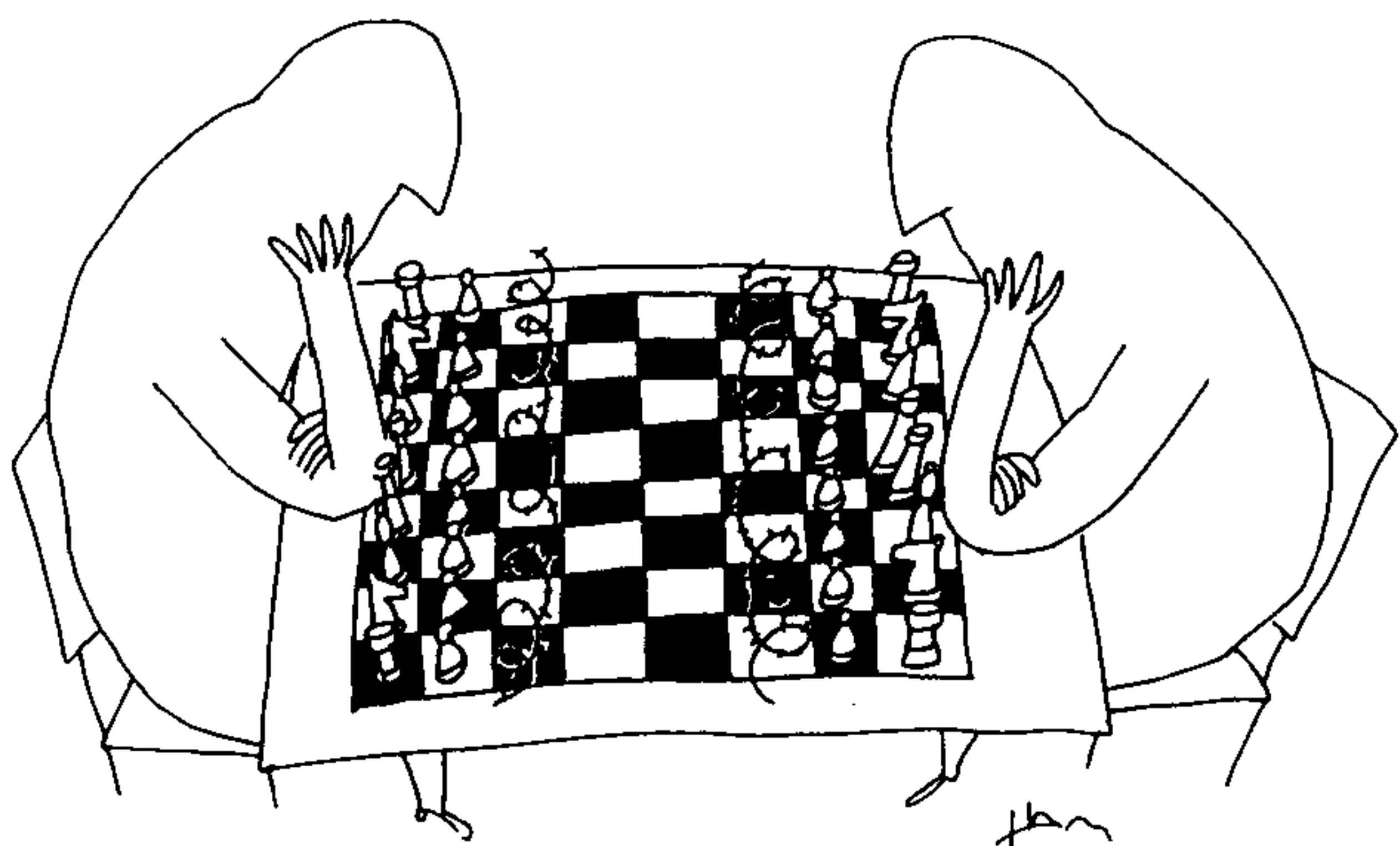
Why am I writing this?

My only wish is to help my client, the Duchess of York.

Fergie: I had climbed the mountain and reached the crossroads. Having reached my bottom, there was nowhere to go but up. It was my anus mirabilis. It was to set me free. It was to be my salvation, my let-off.

Why am I writing this?

My only wish is to help myself.



JUST FANCY THAT

Name: President Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu wa za Banga of Zaire — trans. "the all-powerful warrior who, because of his endurance and inflexible will to win, sweeps from conquest to conquest leaving fire in his wake".

Guardian, 4 November

● In Zaire, Joseph Mobutu banned all Christian names and decided to rename himself Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu Wa Za Banga — this translates freely as "the cock that leaves no hens alone".

Daily Telegraph, 5 November

Literary Review

Smother of invention

Sons and Mothers

Matthew Glendinning and
Victoria Glendinning
(Virago, £16.99)

PARENT-CHILD relationships are one of the hippest things on the media block right now, in case you hadn't noticed. In fact for the past five years and more the air over literary London has been thick with news of voyages round my father, heartfelt excursions towards the motherlode and all the rest of it.

This is Virago's third venture into a crowded market — previous efforts include Sean French's convention of dads in 1993 and a mother and daughter compendium — and the newspapers have been falling over themselves to sniff at Jon Snow's curiously bleak view of his old mum and Kate Saunders' larky account of the rigours of parturition.

Mrs and Master Glendinning, the impresarios of this little volume — like every Virago publication these days, horribly over-priced — have set themselves a stern agenda. "We wanted to veer towards the dangerous," they confess in their preamble. "We wanted a phantasmagoria of extreme emotions and extraordinary inner landscapes — anything at all that avoided the everyday and the expected." Looking excitedly for some of this I turned to page 16 and came upon a poem by Jennifer Dawson which begins:

to my child
with his tiny
pod of a penis
O, how I love to
smother it in kisses,
douse it with vanilla talc:
that butter-pale catkin
of downy-soft skin

No, you haven't mis-read it: *pod of a penis; butter-pale catkin*. Oh well, perhaps Ms Dawson hadn't read the phantasmagoria clause in her contract. The Glendinnings certainly have, though. Master G. shrewdly opines that "Mum rarely misses a trick. As one of my brothers' girlfriends said to me, 'She's a liver', and she didn't mean as opposed to a kidney. Mum is interested in all aspects of life, and gets from it all she can." Mrs G., meanwhile, reveals that "We have talked so much. I have learnt a

great deal, and feel as if a lot of dirt has been cleared away from under the fingernails of my soul."

Insightful stuff, eh? Despite their divergences of generation, race and background, the contributions to *Sons and Mothers* have certain shared characteristics. One of them is an odd air of impersonality.

Jan Dalley, in a piece about her twins, even refers to the members of her immediate family by their initials ("It has been hard for A" etc) rather as if they were characters in a story by Kafka. Adam Mars-Bar contributes the oddest piece of all — a neutral 60-page summary of his mother's life to date in which young Adam barely has a walk-on and declines to examine what must have been one of the key items in the relationship — that is, her darling boy's homosexuality.

tosterone". In describing her precocious three year old, Kate's rhetorical flights soar a good deal further than this, taking in the Bible (Mary, Simeon, Rachel), A.A. Milne and Gulliver, while the birth itself is likened to the storming of the Winter Palace and the burning of the Reichstag.

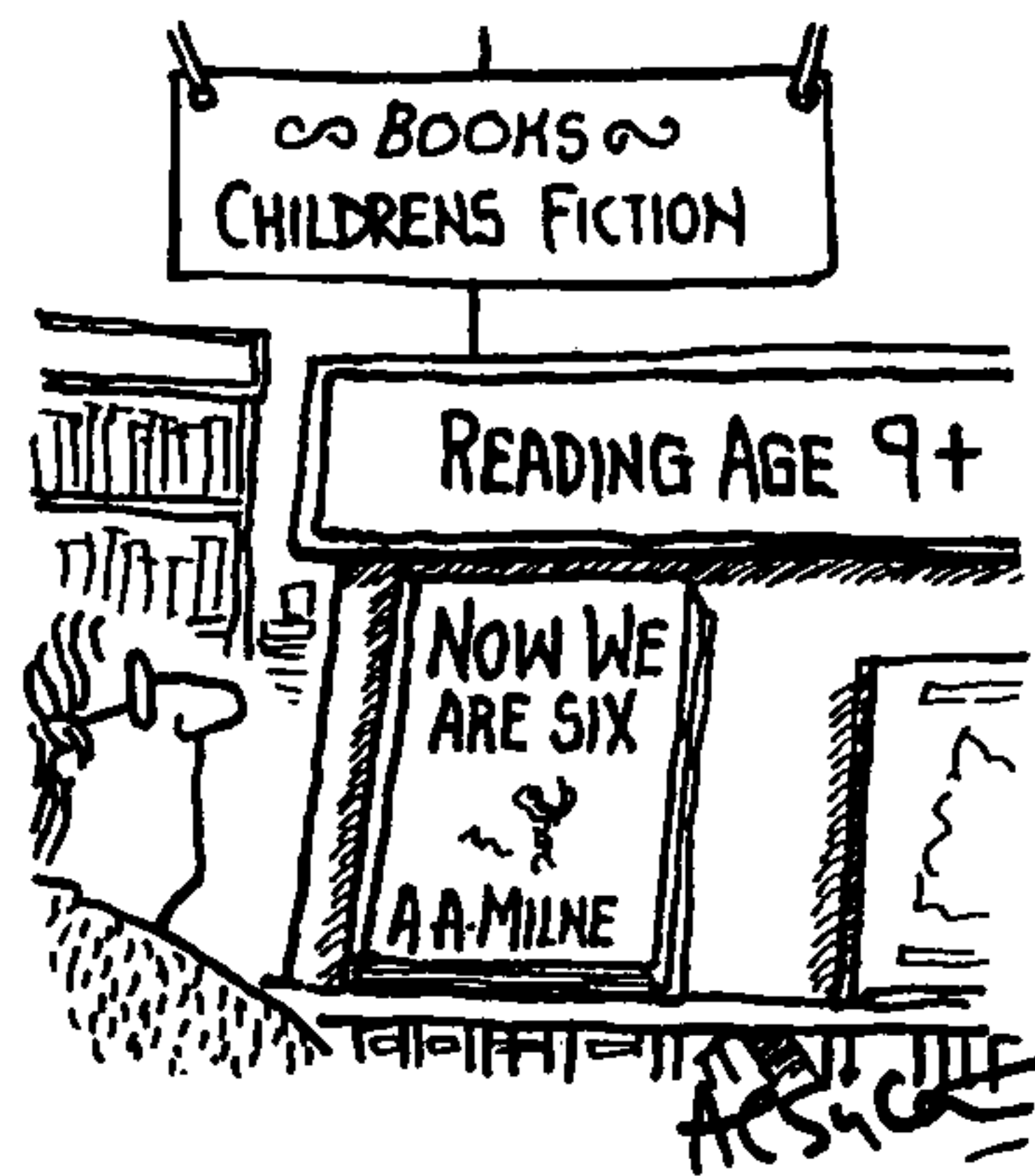
Throughout, though, there rises the thought of real issues being avoided, nettles left ungrasped, people yielding up to the search for significance. Jan Dalley's piece provides an oblique little illustration of this, at the point where the late Angela Carter comes to visit bearing the gift of a cot. Ms Dalley describes this as an "offering to something we were both thinking about, I suppose, for she hardly glanced at the babies themselves. Sensible woman: she was fascinated by 'twins', but she knew they were just two babies." Well, thanks a bunch Angela! The sense of "symbol" taking precedence over flesh and blood is a bit too strong for comfort.

As might be expected, the most interesting pieces are from the non- or semi-professionals — the Catholic priest and the 15 year-old boy, though even he, ghastly to relate, turns out to have written for the *In-*



Elsewhere a wide range of classical reference is on display. "My baby Paris", Sophie Parkin drools over infant son, "what Helen wouldn't willingly leave a thousand Menelauses for this miracle boy?"; while Kate Saunders characterises herself as "a soggy, boggy Niobe: a battered victim utterly beset and cowed by tes-

dependent on Sunday. Spike Milligan's poem "My Mother" is terrific. Modern writers known for their treatment of the subject — A.S. Byatt, for instance — are conspicuously absent. The rest, though occasionally funny and/or moving, presents the usual spectacle in these compilations of journalists performing to order.



BOOKS & BOOKMEN

□ FERGIE's publisher Simon & Schuster was hoping to cash in soon with a series of new Fergie children's stories — about a brash Yank kid who visits London and is befriended by a fun-loving, red-haired royal. Alas, the fact that Her (then) Royal Highness bonked Steve Wyatt when five months pregnant will make it somewhat tricky to plug La Freebiana as a suitable kiddies' author.

Meanwhile British publisher of her seminal *Budgie the Helicopter* series, MacDonald Young Books, says it is not allowed to say how many have been sold. But it adds sweetly: "We won't be publishing any more." The bottom, say the critics, has gone out of the Fergie market.

■ ALTHOUGH John Le Carré's new novel has had some lukewarm reviews, it received nothing but praise from the *Daily Telegraph's* critic, Alan Judd.

"Those fortunate enough to be steeped in Le Carré's world will add this gem to his crown," he gushed.

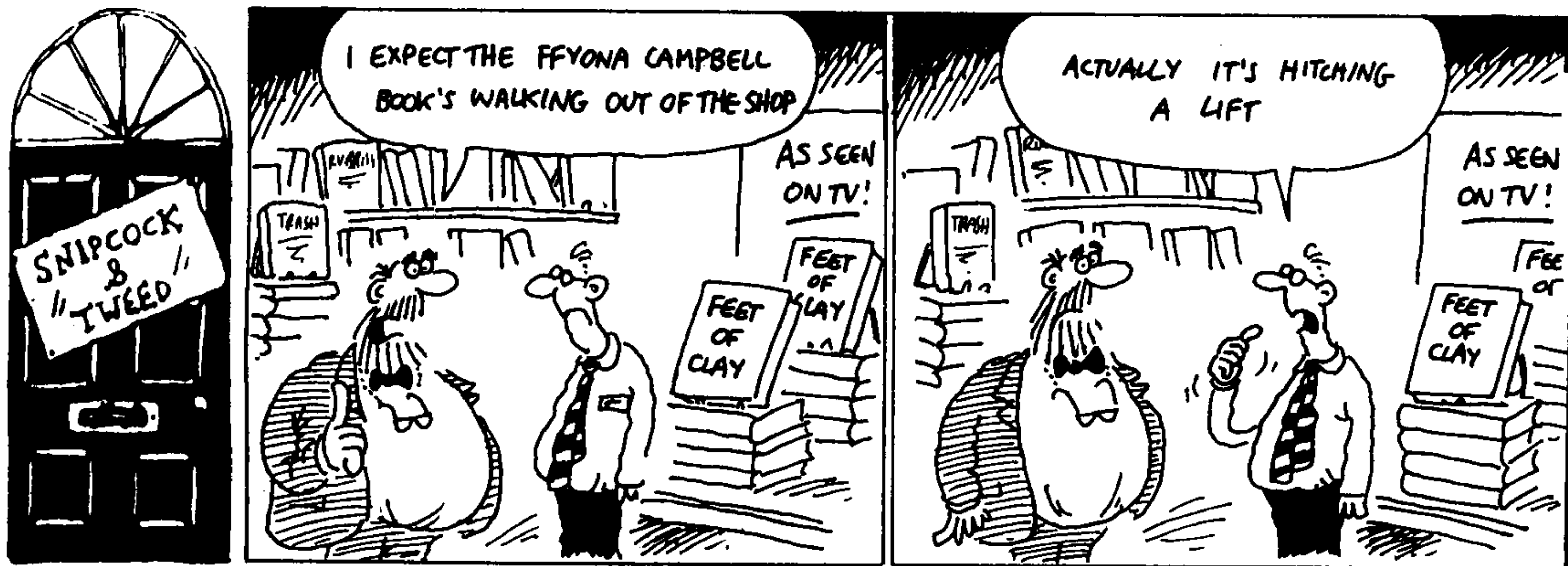
Most *Telegraph* readers will have assumed that he was referring to the "world" of Le Carré's fiction; but he may have meant it more literally. Under his real name of David Cornwell, Le Carré used to be employed by MI6. Oddly enough, Alan Judd is also a pseudonymous novelist; under his real name — Alan Edwin Petty — he has for many years been an officer of MI6. Nice to see that the Circus still looks after its old boys.

□ MORE on the new, pre-election edition of Penny Junor's hagiography of John Major, first called *The Major Enigma* (Michael Joseph 1993) but now renamed *John Major, from Brixton to Downing Street* to stress honest John's lowly roots.

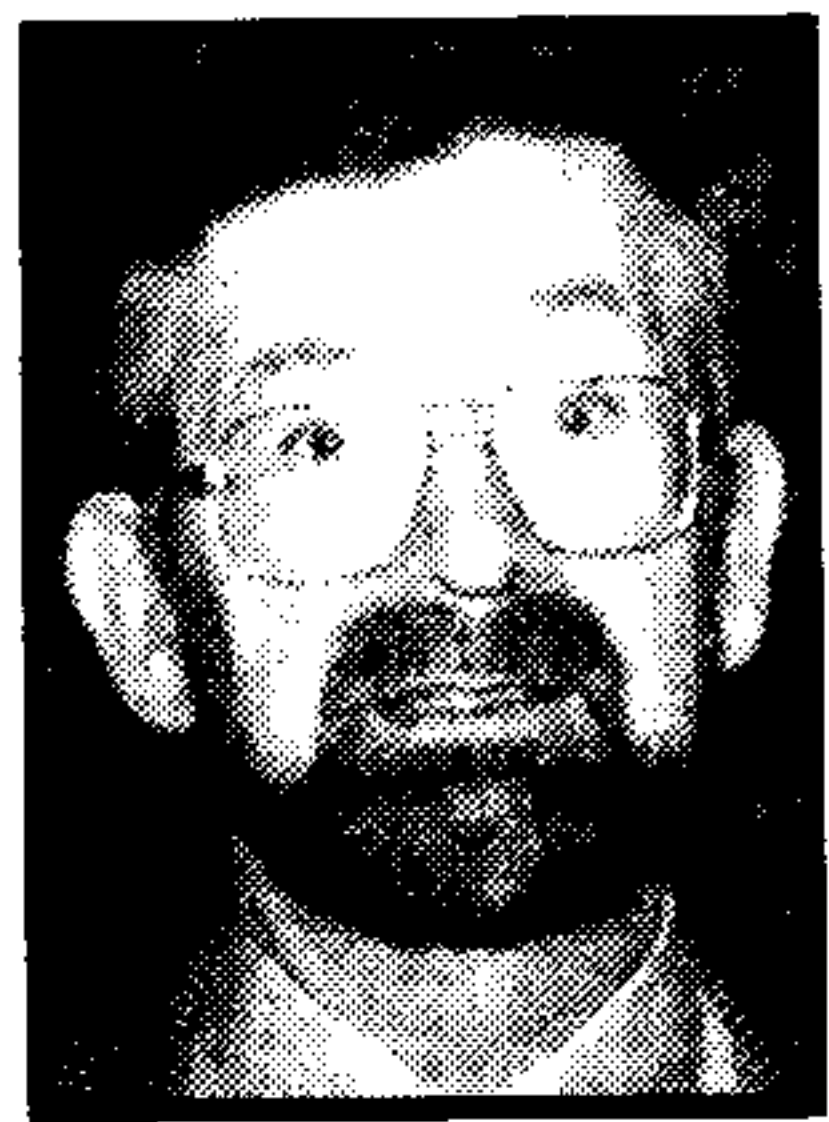
The 1993 edition gives full support to Major's Balkan policies and castigates Lady Thatcher in the strongest terms for demanding that Serb aggression be confronted and stopped. In the interim, before the new edition of the biography was printed, not only was the genocide of Muslims at the hands of Bosnian Serbs widely recorded, but a link between the Tories and the Serbs was discovered when John Kennedy, secretary of the Conservative Committee on Eastern Europe, was revealed as a diligent lobbyist for the Bosnian Serbs.

Hence the new edition is strangely silent on Major's appeasement policy in the Balkans.

'Bookworm'



footnotes



WATT: A DISGRACE

A YEAR AGO, after studying 150 pages of complicated new medical research for less than a day, the government's committee on safety of medicines (CSM) wrote to all doctors recommending that one and a half million women should stop using new birth control pills.

This led to widespread dismay among the women and their doctors. Thousands stopped taking the pills. The number of abortions rocketed — about 5,000 extra are directly attributable to the withdrawal of the pills. Others changed their pills and suffered side effects. At least one woman, judo instructor Sarah Powell from mid-Glamorgan, died.

The chief medical officer for Scotland denounced the CSM letter as a "fiasco". Last May, the combined European experts in the CPMP (Committee for Proprietary Medicines Products) refused to endorse the British government's letter and rejected the health department's scare campaign. The risk of blood clots from the new pills, they concluded, was no higher than the risk which had been accepted for the older pills.

The British government refused to withdraw its "dear doctor" letter and threatened "regulatory action" against the pills. No such action has yet been announced. So although doctors have been advised to get their patients off the pills, there is no formal ban or restriction on them. This is most unusual. Asked by Simon Hughes MP, Liberal Democrat health spokesman, for any other examples of a failure to take regulatory action when a medicine has been declared dangerous, ministers bluntly refused to give the information, pleading "disproportionate cost".

The CSM is normally very cautious about

withdrawing drugs. So why did it advise against these pills in such a rush when the medical case against them was so flimsy? Some say that British health chiefs wanted to be "first in Europe", and rushed out their letter while their European colleagues were still studying the new information; others that the new pills were about to be "exposed" in the gutter press; others that the new pills cost the NHS much more than the old ones. All these are political or economic reasons, not medical ones. They are all denied by the department of health. But the authorities' intense sensitivity to questions on this matter is grimly illustrated by the story of Dr Andrew Watt.

HOWARD OFF THE HOOK

In 1987, Dr Watt, a young award-winning clinical pharmacologist, took charge of medicines regulation at the Scottish office. In 1990 he was appointed director of the innovative medicines assessment research unit at Aberdeen university. When he read the "dear doctor" letter about the birth control pills, he asked the Medicines Control Agency for the data on which the letter was based. When this was refused, he wrote a letter to the *Lancet*, published on 25 November last year, remarking on the "great haste" with which the decision to recommend against the pills had been taken. Almost at once, he says, he was contacted by a member of the committee on safety of medicines who told him that the timing of the "dear doctor" letter had been rushed forward... to attract media publicity on the day home secretary Michael Howard faced intense criticism in the Commons over prison security.

In December Dr Watt published another highly critical letter in the *British Medical Journal*, asking if the CSM advice against the pill without taking any action for stricter

licensing or regulation was lawful. He waited for an official reply. When none came, he wrote three letters: to the secretary of state, Stephen Dorrell; to the chairman of the Medicines Commission; and to the chief executive of the Medicines Control Agency, setting out his doubts about the advice on the pills. The letters went off on 8 January. On 11 January he was summoned by the dean of the medical faculty at the university, Professor Graeme Catto, who said he'd heard "rumours" that Watt had been writing "letters to eminent people" and warned that "there are risks involved in what you are doing". Watt protested bitterly about what he saw as a threat to his academic freedom.

Over the following months he continued to write to the secretary of state pointing out discrepancies in ministerial answers to some 200 questions on the birth control pills from the Liberal Democrat health spokesman Simon Hughes. In May Dr Watt's contract with the university expired. He applied to continue the job he had been doing without criticism for six years, but was told he was not even shortlisted. He was then made "redundant" — which surprised him as his post was subsequently filled by someone else.

"WE DO NOT COMMENT"

In a series of questions to the University of Aberdeen, the *Eye* asked for details about Professor Catto's warning and Dr Watt's "redundancy". The final question was: "Did the failure to renew Dr Watt's contract have anything to do with his letters to the secretary of state and others about the birth control pills controversy?" The answer, a tribute to Aberdeen university's historic commitment to freedom of information, was as follows: "The relationship between the university and any employee, whether past or present, is entirely confidential and it is university policy that we do not comment on such matters."

Andrew Watt moved on. In August he got a job at the Leicester Clinical Research Centre, a commercial organisation. On 13 October, the anniversary of the government's decision to send out the disastrous letter on the contraceptive pills, he wrote again to health secretary Dorrell and prime minister Major demanding a public inquiry.

Eleven days later he was summarily sacked. A woman had fallen ill at the centre and he had alerted the centre's director. To his amazement, he was told by the director not to treat the sick woman but to leave her in the care of a more junior doctor. As the senior doctor there, Dr Watt felt obliged to go back to treat her. He was immediately sacked by letter "following the incident this afternoon when you refused to ignore [sic] a reasonable request... to leave the care of the employee who had collapsed with the doctor who was already dealing with the matter".

The *Eye* asked Dr W.L. Shaw, chief executive of Pharmaco International Inc, of Cambridge, which owns the Leicester Centre, about this sacking, and concluded: "Had Dr Watt's dismissal anything to do with a controversial letter he had written to the secretary of state for health?"

"WE HAVE NO COMMENT"

The exciting reply came from Wollastons, Pharmaco's Chelmsford solicitors: "Our clients have no comment to make." The lawyers helpfully sent the *Eye* a high court injunction they obtained against Dr Watt on 1 November. The injunction prevents him from disclosing the identities of any clients of Pharmaco or any information about their products. The *Eye* trembles in terror. When the *Leicester Mercury* asked Pharmaco about Dr Watt's sacking, the paper was told to shut up or be sued. It shut up.

A Movable Feast

■ "RELOCATION allowances" are paid to fat cats to compensate them when they move home. But the *Eye* can unveil a "relocation allowance" to compensate one fat cat who did not move home.

Recent accounts of National Grid plc (aka National Greed) disclose that in 1994 the chairman David Jefferies got a relocation allowance of £25,000. Yet the accounts also give Mr Jefferies's address as the same lovely house in Virginia Water which he's occupied since 1990.

Follow carefully this explanation from a senior spokesman for PERKY: Chairman Jefferies National Greed.

"The £25,000 is a settling-in allowance. It wasn't to assist the chairman to buy a new property. It was to pay for the costs associated with living in and around the new head office in Coventry when he was full-time chairman and coming to the new head office three days a week. The chairman purchased himself a flat in the Midlands. His £25,000 was to pay not for the property but for the costs associated with having a second property — furniture or whatever."

PS: Last year, Jefferies got £190,000 in special dividends and made a profit of £354,000 on "exercising" share options on top of his pay and bonus of £334,000.



British Smearways

THE time-honoured principle that every man, whatever his wealth, will be treated equally in an English court of law was on parade at the central London county court on 5 November.

On one side was British Airways, supported by City solicitors Beaumonts, Mr Robert Webb QC and another barrister. They were defending a small personal injury claim brought by former Scotland Yard detective John Gorman, who had swallowed broken glass on a British Airways Club World flight in 1993.

Mr Gorman was not in court. On 31 October he had collapsed unconscious and had been taken to the Hospital Las



Americas in the Canary Islands, where he lives. That same day, Gorman's partner Peter Sherman faxed the court and asked for an adjournment. Beaumonts refused to agree, so Sherman faxed them a copy of Gorman's ticket to London, and a note from the hospital that Gorman was being treated there. In a long letter to the court he explained: "Doctors' affidavits are quite impossible to arrange — they were inundated with work during a public holiday when the notary office was closed in any event."

When the court convened, His Honour Judge Nicholas Medawar decreed that there would be no adjournment. The plaintiff, he insisted, had not provided a "semblance" of a medical certificate. He dismissed the case and awarded costs against Gorman. The field was clear for BA's QC to declare, without fear of contradiction, that Gorman's was a "fraudulent claim made by a professional claimant". This allegation, free of libel because it was made in court, was widely circulated in a British Airways press release.

The release made two main charges. First, "Gorman had made three separate claims on different companies in respect of the same

incident". In fact Gorman claimed for medical treatment in New York from two companies who insured him. When one claim — for 163 dollars — was paid, he dropped the other.

Secondly, BA stated: "He had also been a party to many other claims including amongst a number of others, 81 against the medical insurers PPP". In 1994, when John Gorman first came to the Eye with his story, he freely declared that in the course of 27 years extensive flying, he had been compensated for two complaints about food and two claims for lost baggage. None of these complaints was fraudulent.

What about the 81 claims from PPP? During the legal discovery process before the case, Gorman freely handed over all his medical records to British Airways. He is insured with private health insurers PPP. In 1984 he was on police duty when the Grand Hotel Brighton was bombed. He inhaled brown asbestos, and has been an asthmatic ever since. In 1991 he contracted meningitis. He has had medical treatment 81 times in 12 years, on average less than seven treatments a year. All the payments went directly to doctors or hospitals, none to him. When the media, led by the BBC, published BA's smear, Mrs Brenda Klug, customer service director for PPP, personally rang the Eye to say: "We have no complaint whatever about any of Mr Gorman's claims, and we want to disassociate ourselves from the British Airways press release."

Mr Gorman left hospital on 7 November. He now has a medical certificate signed by three doctors confirming he suffered "a bout of reduced consciousness", caused by "abnormal narrowing of the spinal column with signs of cervical arthrosis". He intends to try to set aside Judge Medawar's judgment. His much more serious case against British Airways, alleging consistent harassment, is due to be heard next year.



CHAIRMAN PALMER

SEE YOU LATER, REGULATOR

■ THERE were red faces at the PIA, the regulator of private pension firms, when some subversive leaked to the *Independent* an embarrassing list of private pension swindles still to be investigated. Of 361,119 "priority" suspected swindles, only 9,155 have been assessed and only 2,802 victims compensated.

A typical example is the Legal and General Assurance Society, which, the list reveals, racked up 24,506 "priority" cases of alleged swindles but has only managed to assess 543.

FACT TO REMEMBER: Joe Palmer, chairman of the PIA, was, during the serial mis-selling of private pensions, group chief executive of Legal and General.

In the middle of all this swindle-assessment, the PIA has been lumbered with allegations made by Kenneth Stead, the former compliance director of DBS Financial Management, a nationwide network of financial advisers. This means extra hassle for the PIA because DBS has been forced to postpone a fruitless flotation on the stock exchange until Mr Stead's allegations are investigated.

FACT TO REMEMBER: The chairman of DBS, Mr Ken Davy, is a board member of the PIA.

STAGG HUNTING 2

■ RECENT articles in the *Mail on Sunday* about Colin Stagg and the murder of Rachel Nickell is not the first attempt by the *Mail* papers to prove themselves ace detectives in the case.

On 10 October last year the front page of the *Daily Mail* asked the question DID HE KILL RACHEL TOO? The "he" was not Colin Stagg. It was Robert Napper, who in 1994 was convicted of the horrific mutila-

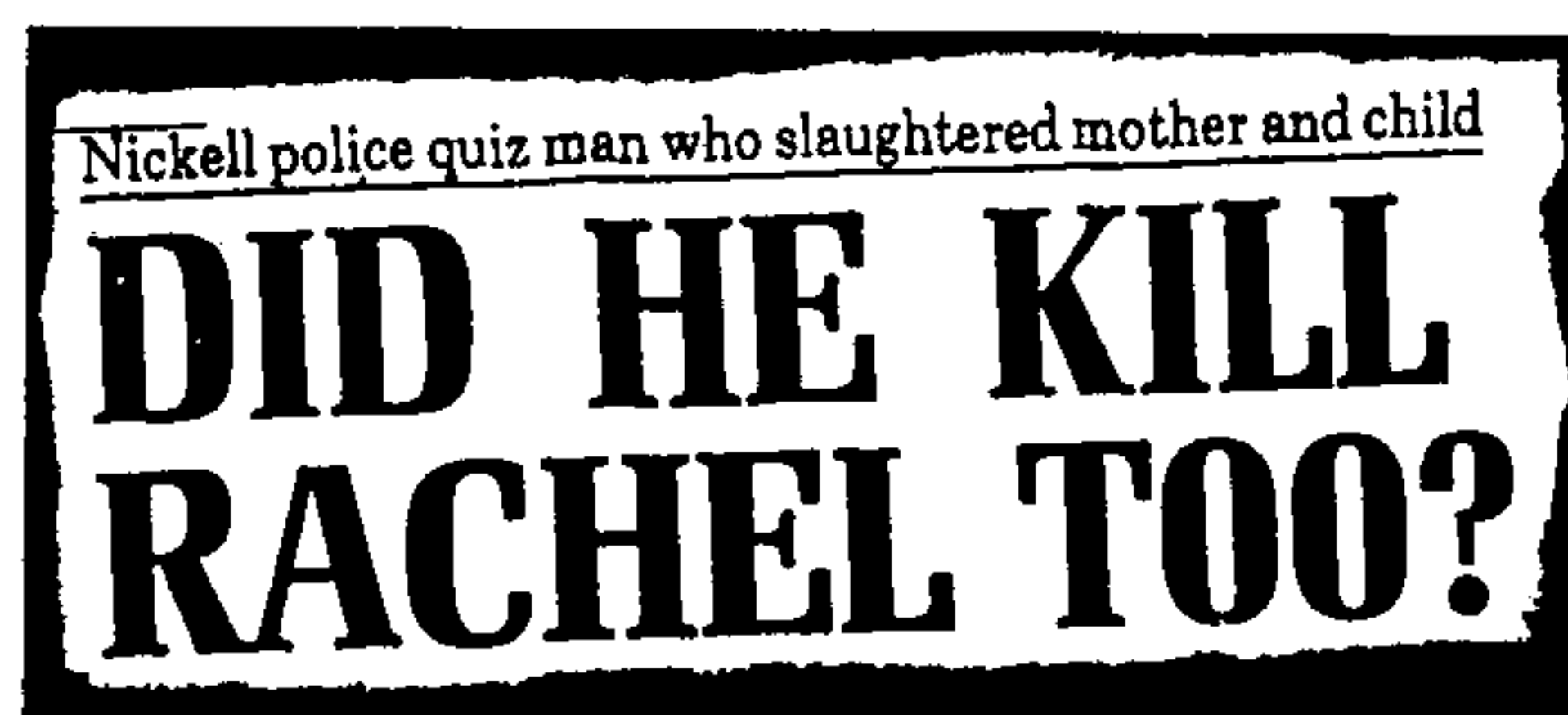
area round Plumstead, several miles from Wimbledon Common, where Rachel Nickell was killed.

The *Mail* reported that Det Insp Alan Jude, who was then leading the new police team investigating the Nickell case would be interviewing Napper. This was also reported in the *Daily Express* of the same date.

There the matter seemed to rest. There was no further mention of Napper in the media. The *Eye* asked Scotland Yard if detectives had interviewed

Napper, and was told: "We never say who we interview in these cases — I'm afraid we can't answer your question". The *Eye* understands, however, that Napper was interviewed in Broadmoor several weeks later by at least one senior detective

(not DCI Jude, who is now retired). Napper denied the Nickell murder. He was asked whether he was at work on the day of the Nickell murder three years previously, but could not remember. No further action was taken. A year later, the attention of the self-appointed "detectives" who work for the *Daily Mail* and the *Mail on Sunday* turned back to the original (cleared) suspect.



Daily Mail front page, October 10 1995

tion and killing of Samantha Bisset and her four-year-old daughter Jasmine in their flat in south-east London. Napper pleaded guilty to the killings, and to three other rapes in the area, two of them on common land. He was convicted of manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility and sent to Broadmoor.

There were several similarities between the Nickell and Bisset murders. Napper looked not unlike the identikit picture issued by police after the Nickell murder, and there were some features of the assault on Rachel Nickell which coincided with the injuries on Napper's victims. On the other hand, all Napper's offences were committed in a small



COLIN STAGG



ROBERT NAPPER

LAMONTABLE

■ UNTIL October 1993, everything in the garden at First Phillipine Trust (a new way of making easy money in the City) was lovely. In the year to that month the trust made a profit of £101,000, the value of sales increased in value by £13.3 million and the net asset value per share was 91.8p.

Then the former chancellor Norman Lamont joined the board. Just as shareholders were recovering from this blow, they reeled from another one. Sir Archibald Hamilton, Tory MP for Epsom and Ewell and former minister for the armed forces, joined the board as well.

In 1994 losses were £336,000. No dividend was paid, but shareholders were reassured that "this should not be taken as a guideline for the future". Indeed not. In 1995 the trust's assets plunged by £10.8 million. Today the net asset value per share is only 3.5 percent higher than it was two years previously. Shareholders who followed the former chancellor into the trust would have done better to have put their money in the post office.



In the City

FURTHER evidence of how, in the final months before the fall, Morgan Grenfell's star fund manager Peter Young was the man who could not or would not say "no", emerges from details of Young's love affair with Princess Resources, the latest not-so-hot stock promoted by Rupert Galliers-Pratt.

Princess was supposed to be mining first diamonds and then gold in the former Soviet Union. "Polaroid" was so impressed by Princess and "RPG" that his European Growth Trust ended up with an undeclared 26 percent interest, breaching not only British but Canadian regulations regarding maximum 10 percent and disclosable stakes respectively.

The justification for this £3-4 million investment was Princess's prospects in Russia and Kazakhstan. But by April this year it was clear these were further figments of the over-exercised "RPG" imagination. In particular, the Kazakh gold deal for which "Polaroid" had signed on in 1995 was all but dead. The deal looked like going to a rival consortium. Yet despite this development and an opportunity to bow out, Young still proceeded to more than double his Princess stake by injecting just under £2 million.

As part of a July 1995 \$17.5 million financing for the Kazakh deal, Young had taken up his usual generous slice — a third — of an issue of special warrants. The London broker for this placing was Young favourite, T. (Timbuktu) Hoare. It was a condition of the warrants that if the Kazakh deal did not go down, the investors could walk away with their money plus interest.

Several warrant investors did just that. But not Young. Instead his trust accepted 11.7 million Princess shares at 26 cents each, well below the then market price. This alone represented a 15 percent stake, but nobody at Morgan Grenfell either noticed or cared enough to check how this squared with UK regulations or what obligations for disclosure were triggered. And if anyone outside Morgan Grenfell said anything, they said it to Young who, for obvious reasons, did nothing. Princess for one claims it told Young that Morgan Grenfell would now have to file reports of its share deals as both an insider and a control group as its total stake exceeded 20 percent.

By early June the Kazakh deal was well and truly buried. Furthermore, Princess had turned its back on Europe and headed south to the sunnier climes of Africa, acquiring mining leases in Zambia and Tanzania via the appropriately named Blue Sky Resources.

The impact on the Princess shares was to halve the price to around 20 cents. This new direction also made Princess hardly eligible for a "European"

fund. But with 20 million shares and 26 percent of the company Young was hardly in a position to sell. So Morgan Grenfell clients have ended up locked into a bad deal they could have largely escaped. As with several other "Polaroid" deals (particularly the \$70 million plus Solv-Ex investment), it remains for the Serious Farce Office to perhaps explain why Young was so generous with other people's money.

WHILE Asil Nadir's apologists (led by the *Mail on Sunday*) talk of his return to Britain a free man with writs aplenty for his defeated enemies, the situation in his Northern Cyprus refuge is far less rosy.

Nadir is understood to have bounced cheques for £350,000 and \$100,000 to a local casino owner to repay loans made two years ago. Bouncing cheques is a criminal offence, so the local police are said to be on the case.

This suggests further writs — if not more direct action — to follow those already launched by Nadir's erstwhile partner in bonk and bank, Sadika Atalay, for \$8 million as well as another from Polly Peck's former local auditor, Huyesin Erdal, who claims Nadir assigned to him various assets.

Meanwhile the Turkish Cypriot government would appear to have given up any hope of recovering the \$5 million its pensioners "loaned" to Nadir's bankrupt bank.

Local sources suggest that with only his newspapers left Nadir is fast running out of both assets and income. He is rapidly becoming an embarrassment to not just the government but more powerful interests. Which may explain stories of death threats more than any Greek plots.

THE law lords will soon hear the home secretary's appeal in the extradition of former banker Ewan Launder, wanted in Hong Kong on corruption charges involving £4.5 million in alleged bribes.

In August the court of appeal here accepted Launder's argument that to send him back to Hong Kong was to risk a possible death penalty once the Chinese take over next year. It ordered a judicial review of the decision to extradite Launder.

But elsewhere a less sympathetic attitude prevails to those accused of crimes in the British colony and who could be in prison or awaiting trial when those champions of human rights arrive.

Three weeks after Launder received his lifeline an American federal court ordered the extradition to Hong Kong of a former senior BAT executive, Jerry Lui, accused of receiving \$4 million in bribes to supply cigarettes to major smugglers. More significantly, at the end of September Launder's former biggest client, George Tan, was jailed for three years in Hong Kong after pleading guilty to fraud.

Tan, like Launder, had avoided justice for 14 years since his property group Carrian crashed. But now the Carrian founder will be in jail when the Chinese arrive. Unlike Launder — unless the law lords rule he must go — whose Wardley bank was Carrian's largest

lender for reasons that had a great deal to do with the banker's departure from Hong Kong.

AN overlooked aspect of the recent £1 billion-plus flotation of Thistle Hotels was the possible pressing tax problems of its major shareholder Sir Ron Brierley and his companies. These stem from allegations of tax fraud in New Zealand made before the recent election by then opposition MPs, particularly the now highly influential Winston Peters.

Peters sparked what has become known as the "Wine Box" scandal as a result of producing a carton of documents detailing deals involving the Cook Islands tax haven and assorted Kiwi companies. Two Brierley companies, the Bank of New Zealand and Industrial Equity, have been mentioned as fans of Cook Island deals.

An investigation was launched which has led to demands for substantial back taxes from the Brierley empire. Not long after a demand for up to £100 million arrived, Brierley decided to float Thistle Hotels and cash in part of his investment.

BUSINESSMAN Tony Buckingham, who combines Liberal credentials such as links to Sir David Steel and the *Guardian* with connections to shadowy South African mercenaries, has taken a step into the spotlight.

Branch Energy, to which Buckingham modestly describes himself as a mere consultant, has been injected into the Vancouver-listed "shell" Carson Gold now DiamondWorks. Buckingham and others have received some £30 million in shares in the company, which is linked to controversial mining company promoter and polluter Robert Friedland.

Branch is said to contain diamond prospects in Angola and Sierra Leone, both countries which have hired out the services of Buckingham's associates at Executive Outcomes, providers of private armies of mercenary advisers to governments in need of extra muscle.

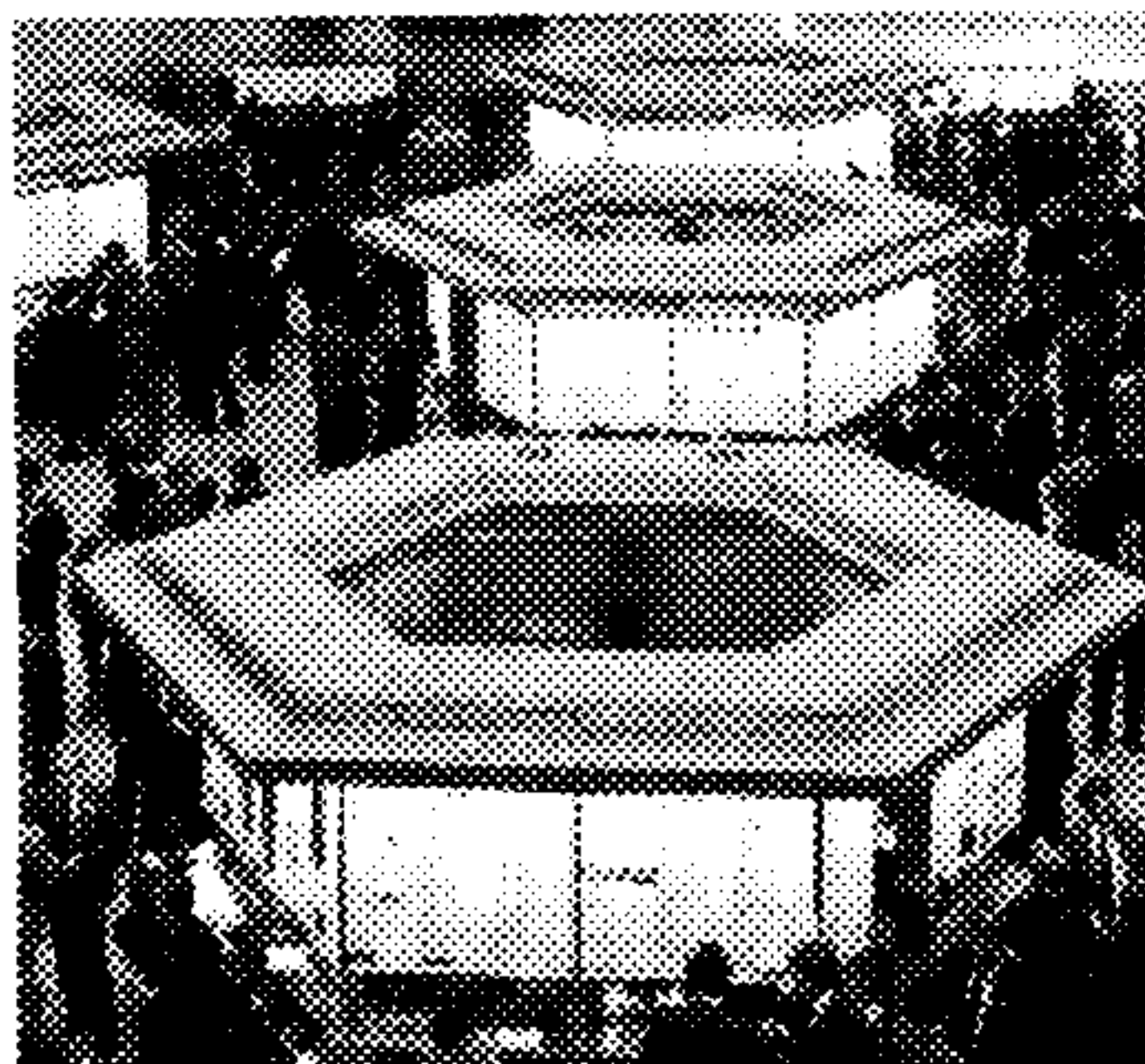
Branch is the largest shareholder in Heritage Oil & Gas — director Steel — which has an oil concession offshore from Angola. Executive Outcomes, run and staffed by former British and South African special forces veterans, was hired to help defeat the Unita rebels in Angola.

Branch entered the Sierra Leone deal soon after Executive Outcomes was hired by the military government to drive rebel forces from the diamond fields. By remarkable non-coincidence, another Executive Outcomes private army may soon be working in war-torn southern Sudan where Branch has been interested in an oil deal.

The DiamondWorks shareholding has been mostly issued to Buckingham — a shareholder in *Guardian*-controlled publishers Fourth Estate. Doubtless Buckingham's not so liberal South African friends have no interest.

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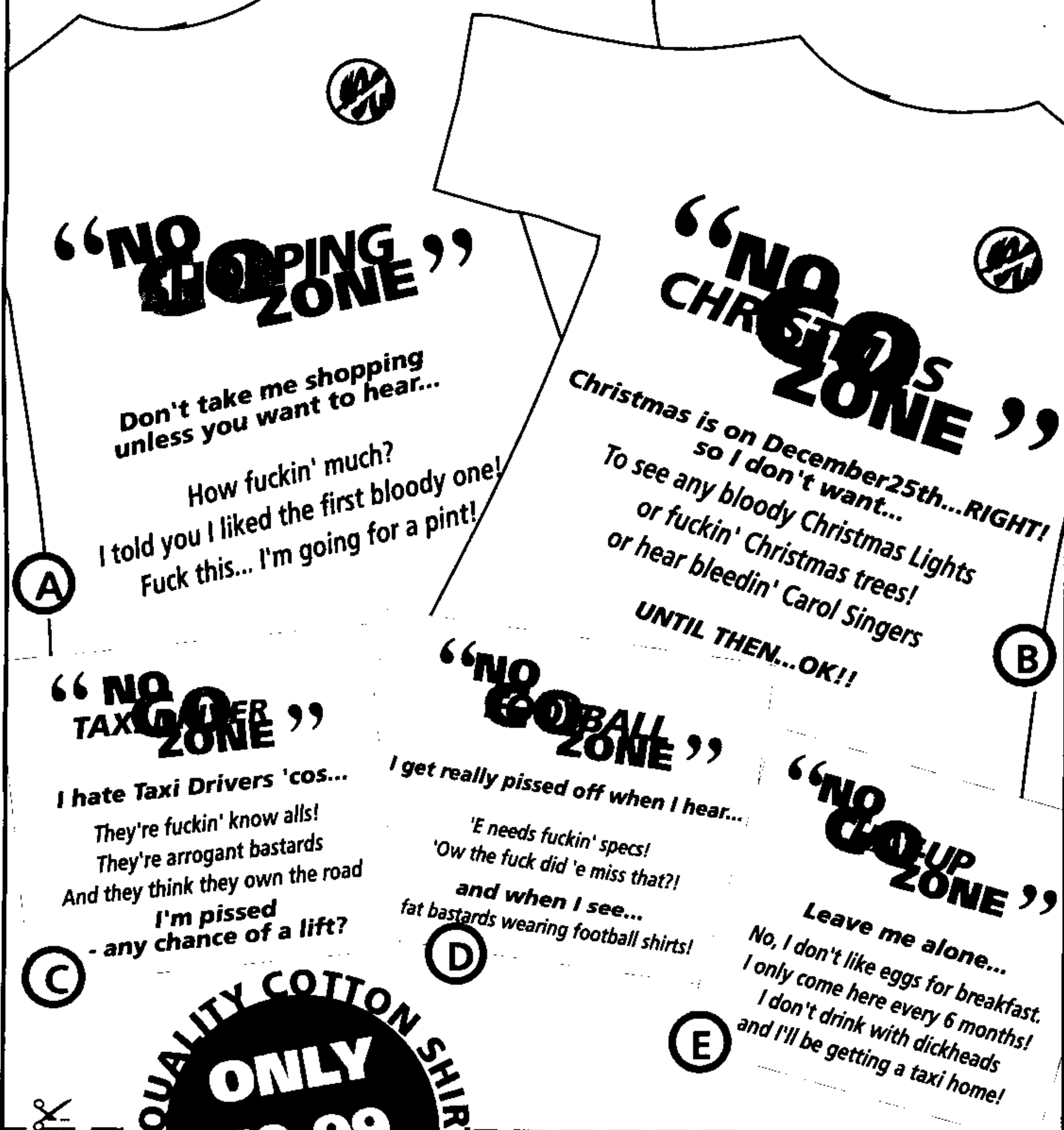
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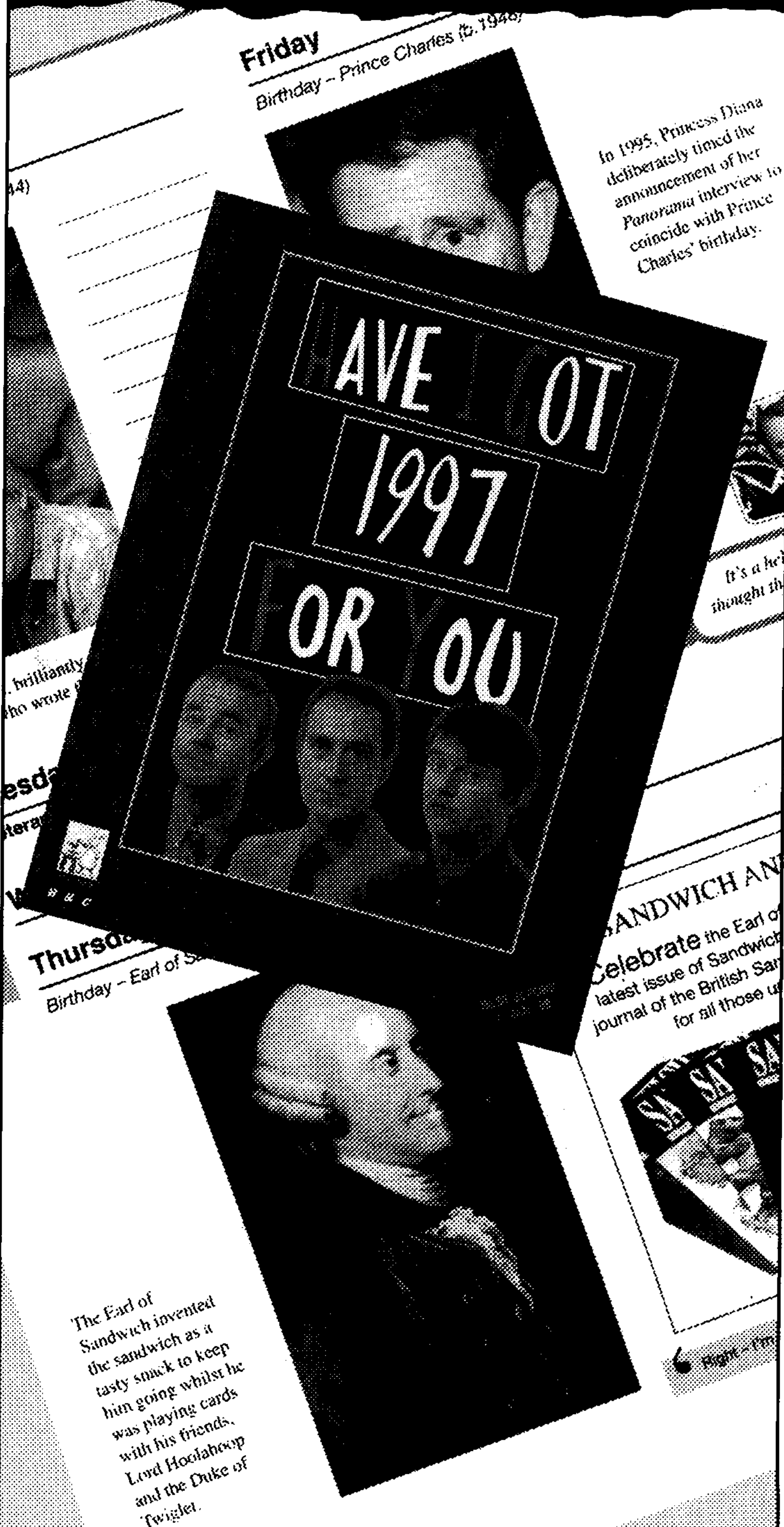
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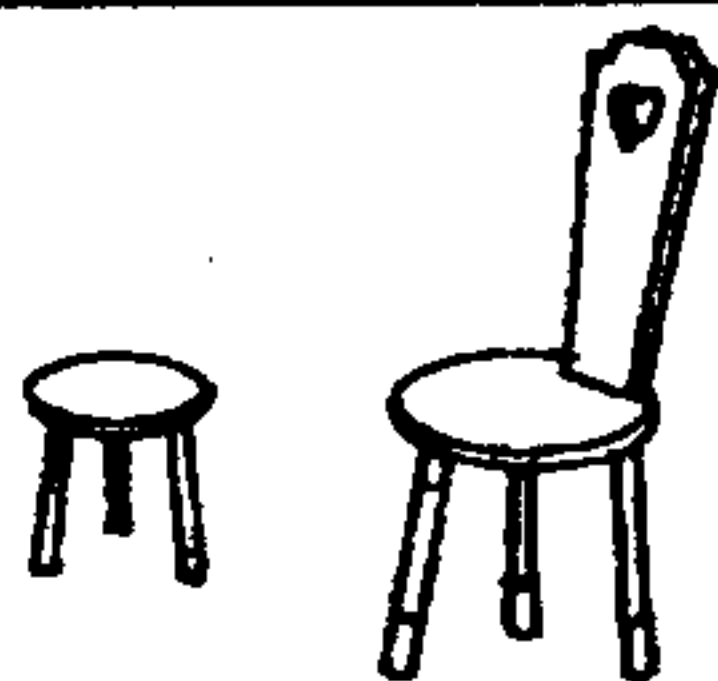


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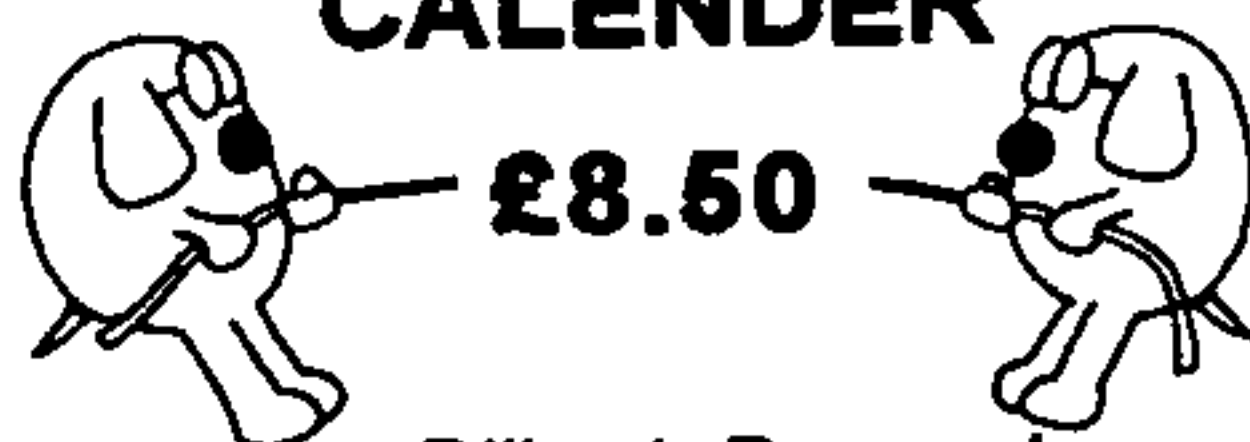


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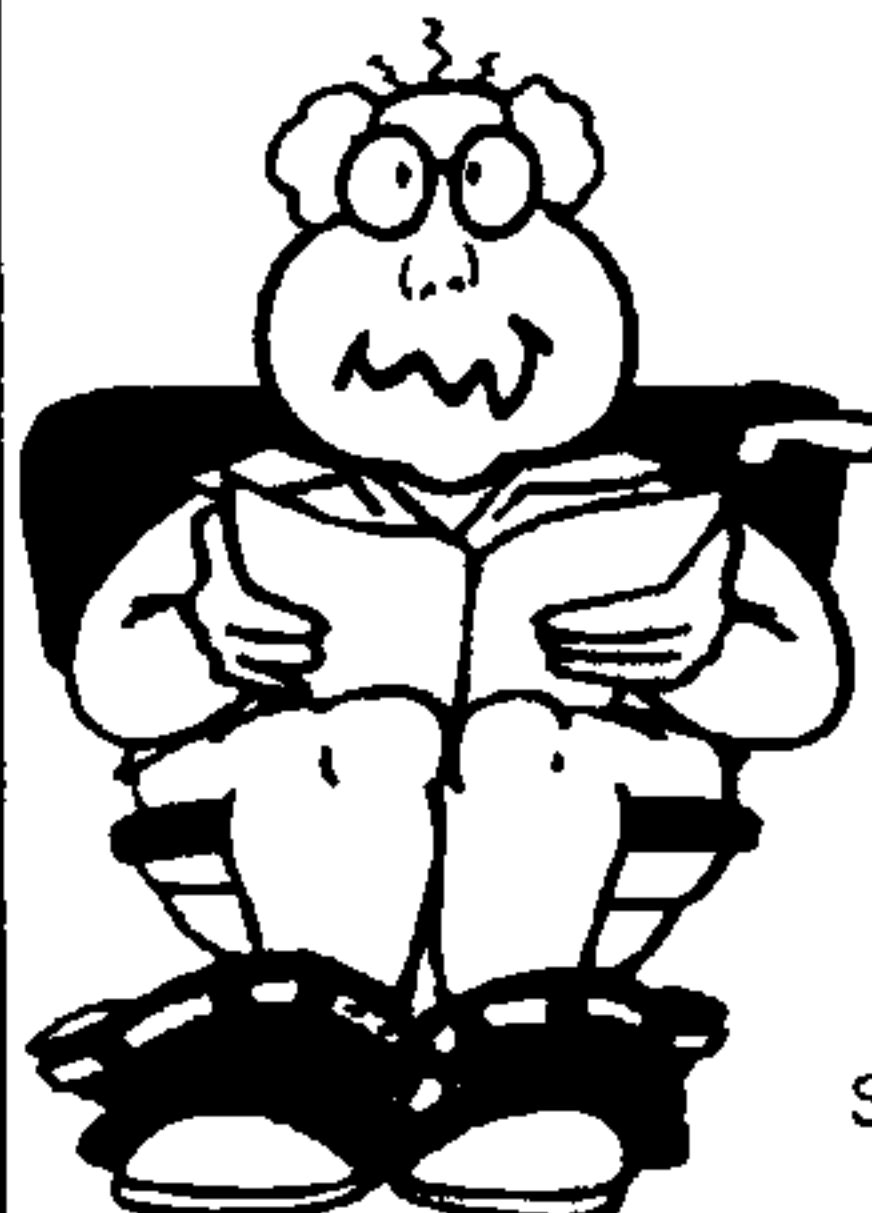
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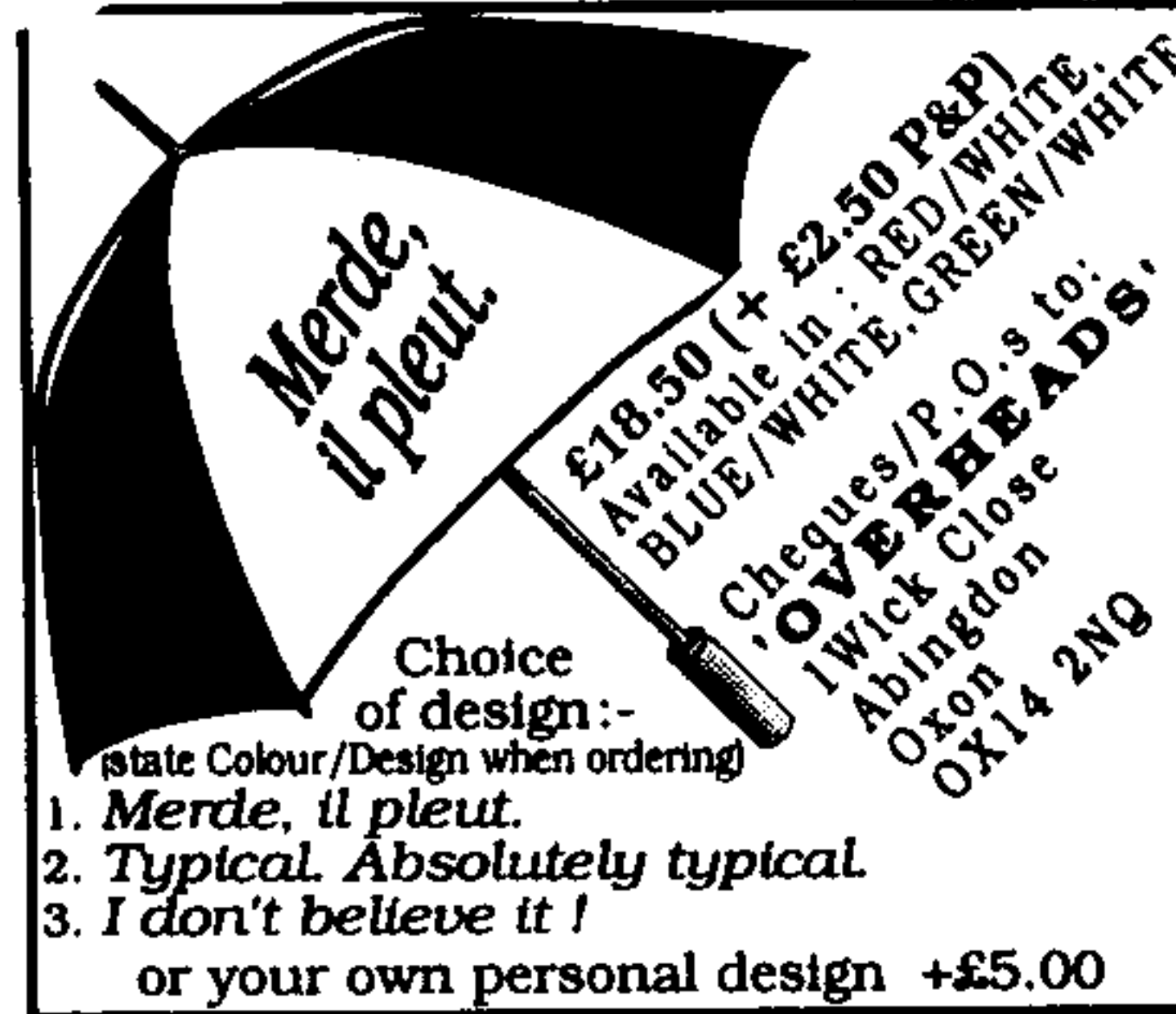
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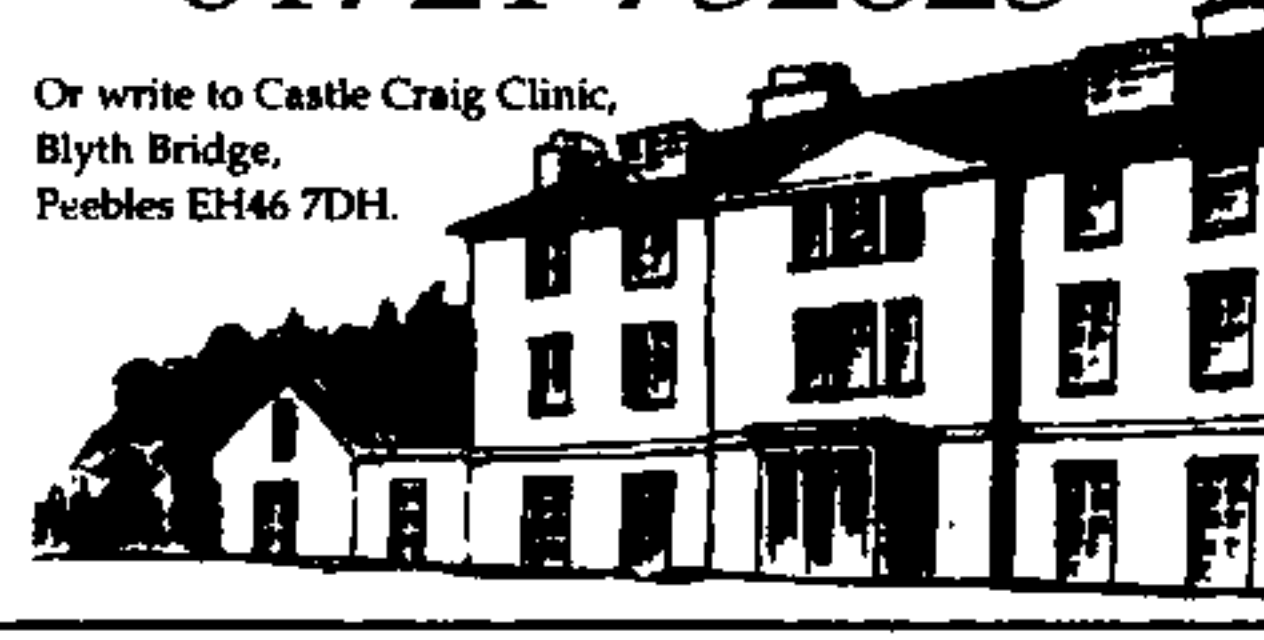
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URGENT — £3,000 needed to complete counselling diploma. Box 0510.

MUM OF 2 — working 13hrs a day to keep family together — in need of financial help. First Direct 40-47-84 60954977.

BOUNCY 22 NEEDS boobs to match. Offers? Box 0610.

MIDWIFE, SINGLE MUM — (sadly, no miracle worker). I need money for microwave, car and holiday! Box 0710.

FEMALE HISTORY postgraduate needs help to continue study. Halifax 11-06-68, 00009080.

DESPERATE AFRICAN refugee £7,500 to finish school. MIDLAND 40-27-34 81171267.

PLEASE HELP — £300 is all I need to complete my training as a spiritual healer. Absent healing offered to all contributors. Box 0810.

LADY IN DISTRESS — alone with two children, no other family. Please help us find some financial security before Christmas. Thank you. Halifax: 00294689, Sort Code: 11-07-37.

STUDENT NEEDS FUNDS for Antarctic expedition. Natwest 60-09-50, 26111462. Details email ee32tr@surrey.ac.uk

PLEASE HELP — London experience failed. £9,000 needed. Abbey National Sort 09-01-26. A/c 23551856. Sincerest thanks.

PROMISING ROWER — GB hopeful, seeks £10,000, or part of, for new equipment and training. Box 1811.

THERAPY ARTHRITIC back council ban from home repossession no income! Loan please MIDLAND 81245821/40-22-22.

ENTREPRENEUR LADIES seek backing stage newcountry festival LLOYDS 0228855/30-99-97.

NOWHERE TO TURN — please help. LLOYDS 30-90-28, 1413857.

DESPERATE CONSERVATION student needs help. Box 0111.

SYMPHONIC COMPOSER needs money to finish major work without Viperous Bastards devouring his soul. Contributions acknowledged on publication. Box 0211.

SHAMELESSLY OPTIMISTIC yet curiously pragmatic nurse, wife and mother of two — finances bugged, £15,000 in debt. Hardworking husband will not be best pleased with this ad, but what the hell. Any contributions very much appreciated. Thanks. LLOYDS BANK, Sort Code 30-90-49, Account Number 0088916.

OUTDOOR/INDOOR electric wheelchair — daughter 13, cerebral palsy — NHS can't/won't help. 01432 275631.

STABBED IN THE BACK by office rivals. Fired lady needs donations. Box 1511.

SEED CAPITAL of £21,000 needed urgently. BARCLAYS 20-44-86, 10825751 or Box 1611.

£3,000 URGENTLY NEEDED by desperate woman. LLOYDS 309156, 0914397.

NURSE INVOLVED with abusive possessive partner needs £20,000 to start new life. HALIFAX B/S 11-03-47, A/c 00769203.

YOUNG ARTIST recovering from serious illness desperately needs £10,000 to reclaim life. Box 1711.

DONATIONS TO START craft business. Please help, god bless. BARCLAYS 20-24-61, 10854085.

DESPERATE HUMAN BEING wishes to flower — needs £10,000 all heaven sent to CO-OP, 08 93 00, Account 1235176356. Genuine request. High purpose. Thank you.

GUARANTORS FOR legal costs maximum £8,000, for industrial tribunal, to expose harassment for reporting abuse of handicapped people. Box 1911.

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OFFBEAT MANAGING director seeks bright girlfriend to mix business with pleasure. 0171 792 8825 or Box 3706.

FARMER, 36, wishes to meet kind, honest, caring female 18-35 for relationship and to share in comfortable life style. Photo. Box 2110.

PROSPEROUS MALE, tall, blond, fit, easy going, 46, unattached lives Knightsbridge, has lost his pyjamas, seeks sensual passionate girl to keep him warm. Photo please. Box 2109.

SOLDIER, 40, married, wants woman friend Bucks, Berks, London, Oxon. Box 2209.

SINGLE PROFESSIONAL male, graduate, 6'2", SE London, loves cinema, theatre, music and eating out & in. Seeks bright, funny female for company as dark winter nights draw in. Box 2409.

ATTRACTIVE, SUCCESSFUL, 34, interests include theatre, sailing, diving, ski-ing — outdoors, seeking tall, attractive, successful, adventurous male with passion for living. Age 28-40, 50 mile radius Nottingham. Photo please. Box 2509.

LIFE — Is it really all over? Lonely, buxom wench, 31, seeks Nick Hancock (ono) to make her laugh again. SE/Surrey. Box 2709.

CITY KNIGHT, 42, brains, looks, money and wit. Seeks warm, attractive woman, 30-40, to share his castle. Photo please. Box 2809.

MANCUNIAN WRITER, paunchy, fittish, mid-fifties, separated, seeks local muse. Loves cooking, France, fresh air and music. Box 1010.

LOOKING FOR SOMEONE different from the usual Barbie doll, Stepford wife and gold digger? Female 30 tall slender attractive with gypsy blood wltm decent man with down to earth soh. North West. Box 1110.

PROFESSIONAL MALE, 40, married but bored, wltm lady, North Wales/North West, for discreet liaisons. Photo appreciated, total discretion assured. Box 1210.

DOCTOR SEEKS Night Nurse for fun, friendship and hopefully some intimate intensive care. London. Box 1310.

BORING OLD FART, 38, seeking female companionship. Fellow bores welcome. Box 1410.

SINGLE MIDLANDS MAN, 41, slim intelligent specs balding seeks sensual lady for lasting relationship. She can be slim, buxom or pendulous. Age irrelevant. Box 1510.

DOMINANT MALE requires respectful correspondence from submissive female. Box 1610.

WEALTHY ATTRACTIVE dominant male (45) seeks submissive female under 30, possibly attached, tall or large. Box 1710.

HELICOPTER PILOT seeks overnight landing pad for his chopper. Whirly bird with revolutionary performance required. London, SE preferred, but have car, will autorotate. Box 1810.

MALE YOUNG 46, lost in Devon seeks female with map and compass. Box 1910.

DESPERATELY SEEKING sandalwood scented redhead enchantress who asked me for the Newport-Paddington train 4.45 Sunday 6 October. Please write. Box 2010.

WHERE HAVE ALL the Yorkshire females gone who are interested in a discreet affair? I wltm a n/s slim attractive attached female 35+ for fun and frolics. Box 2210.

OLDER WOMAN SOUGHT by attractive educated 30s man for occasional liaison. You're 45-55, wicked soh, 70m radius of London. Box 2310.

YOUNG PROFESSIONAL teddy bear (M, 23) is looking for an artistic girl in the South West for friendship and fun. Box 2410.

BLONDIE HANGING on the telephone desperately seeking blue moon turned to gold. Box 0411.

EFL TEACHER, 47, handsome, ex-professor abroad, seeks 30-40 something attractive intelligent female with view to marriage. Photo please. Box 0711.

DESPERATELY SEEKING Susan or Charlotte or Mabel? Attractive professional male, 29, seeks intelligent good-looking woman. London. Box 2510.

SLIM PROFESSIONAL MALE, 30, seeks attractive female, age unimportant, for uncomplicated relationship. Photo please. Home Counties. Box 2610.

ATTRACTIVE, INTELLIGENT, slim, blonde with gsoh sought for fun, TLC, mutual spoiling by nice wealthy professional guy in his 40s. West London. Write with photo to Box 2710.

SAD UGLY GIT, attached obviously. Seeks female. Me 45 — you must have personality, humour and curves. All tastes, types welcome. London S/East. Box 2810.

ATTRACTIVE MAN, 44, seeks lady any age for discreet sensual liaisons. Box 2910.

MALE, 43, tall, dark, handsome, slim, professional, seeks large, attractive, voluptuous woman for discreet pleasures. London/SE. Box 3010.

GORGEOUS GOLDBLOCKS, 39, attached, alluring, seeks belligerent bear with honey gold or russet fur for amorous activities in London area. Bear's age, height, status immaterial; vitality and vigour essential. Box 3110.

NOT UNATTRACTIVE MALE, slim, affluent, intelligent, dominant, kindly seeks compatible female for wining, dining, etc. London. Box 3210.

SLIM, SOPHISTICATED 5'8" blonde Cheshire lady. Financially independent. Seeks affluent, kind, businessman, 45-55, to share her life. Photo please. Box 3310.

FEMALE, WRITER, Nationals, young 40, attractive, fair, slim, sincere. Genes itching for survival. So, upmarket, globally compassionate, honest, funny, tall, dark, man under 45? Green landowner, composer, artist, medic, stringer, snapper? Even TFK... but kind, romantic, long-term? Box 3410.

INTELLIGENT, TALL, witty man, 28, seeks sincere, thoughtful, romantic older woman for togetherness and winter warmth. Oxford/London. Box 0311.

TALL UNATTACHED MAN, 42, relatively unravaged, slim, athletic, sensitive, solvent and sensual seeks intelligent, sporty, artistically inclined woman with love (ono) in mind. Status immaterial. Lon/SE. Box 0511.

SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEUR, 42, married and very bored, seeks a fulfilling relationship with fun loving, sensual and passionate lady who lives in the Home Counties or London. Age immaterial but sense of humour and adventure essential. Box 0611.

TIED BUT FREE, eclectic woman seeks intelligent man, 50+, for laughter, rapport, communication. (No "fit" bearded n/s veggies seeking legovers.) Photo please. Box 1311.

AFFECTIONATE, CARING, incurable romantic tactile mature lady with passion for music, singing, horses, wltm adventurous gent with very gsoh. Age, looks immaterial. ALA. Box 1411.

MALE, FULL HEAD OF HAIR, vgc, attached, solvent public sector professional, 45, North London, seeks woman friend, perhaps older. Box 1111.

BALDRIC, 29, 5'6", graduate into mountains and Ch4 films. Seeks intelligent, wise, n/s female to make the long winter evenings fly by (London). Box 1011.

SINGLE CHAP, 28, busy but easygoing. Would like to meet an intelligent, good natured and fun woman to share usual stuff with. Box 1211.

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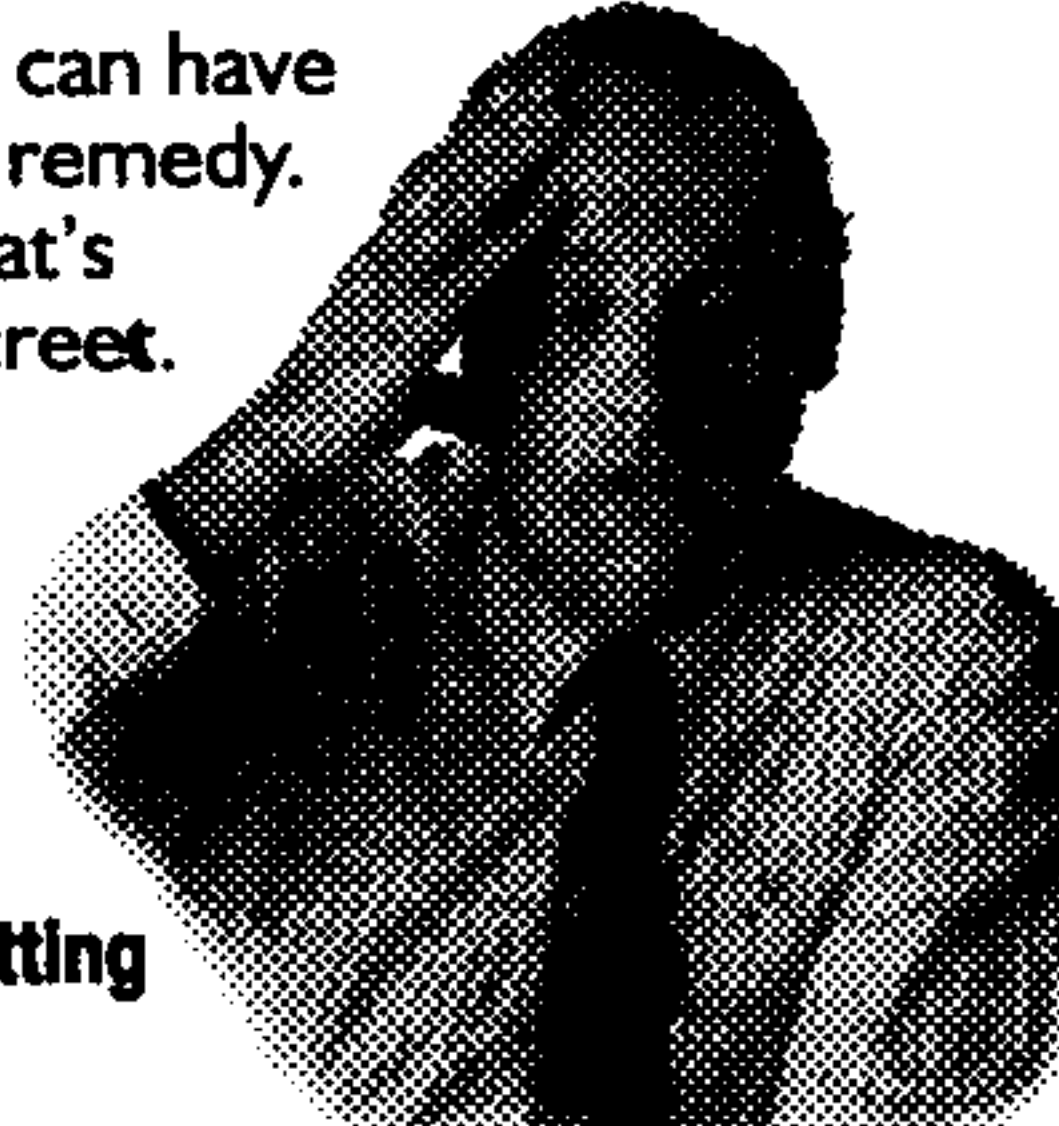
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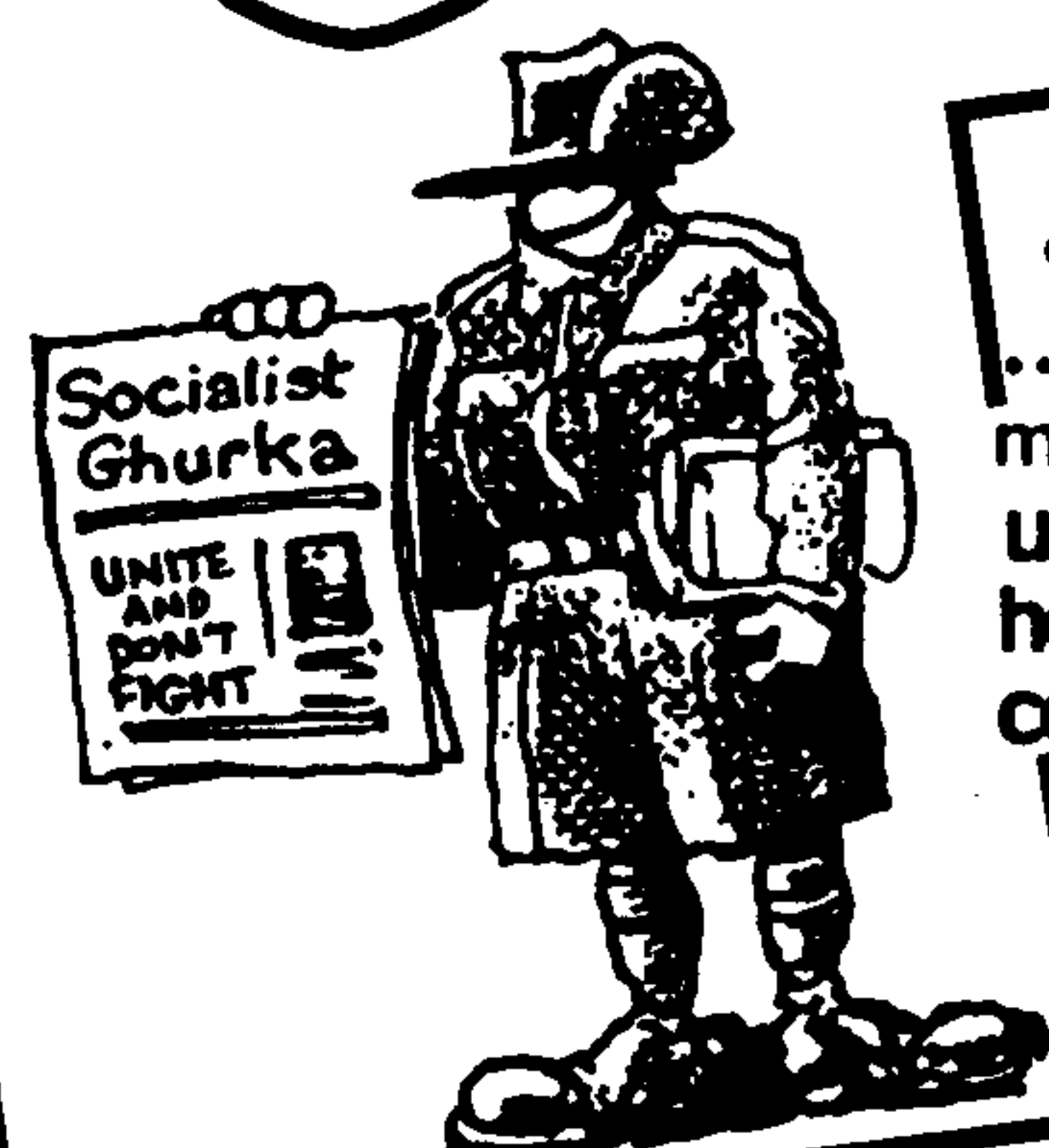
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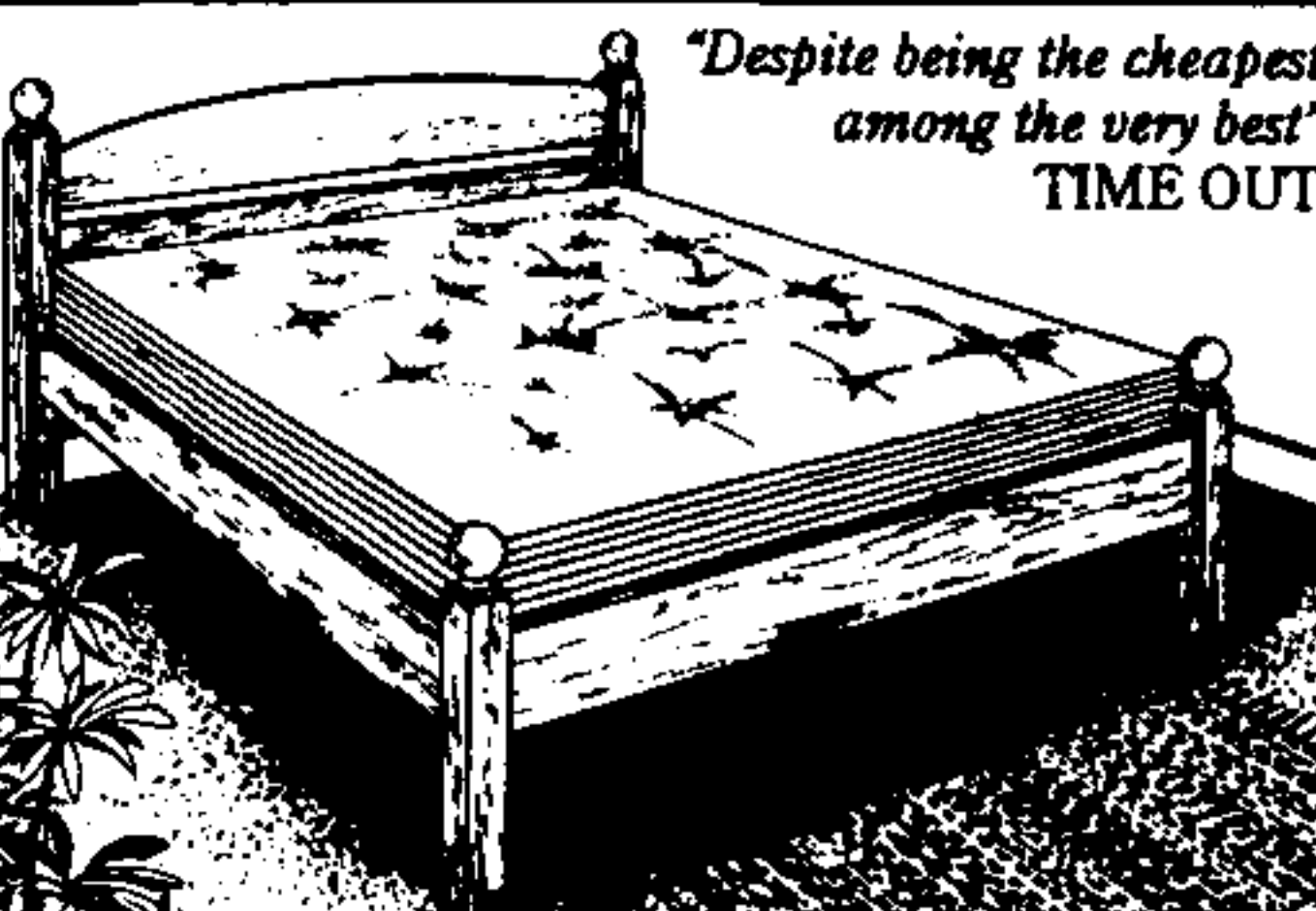
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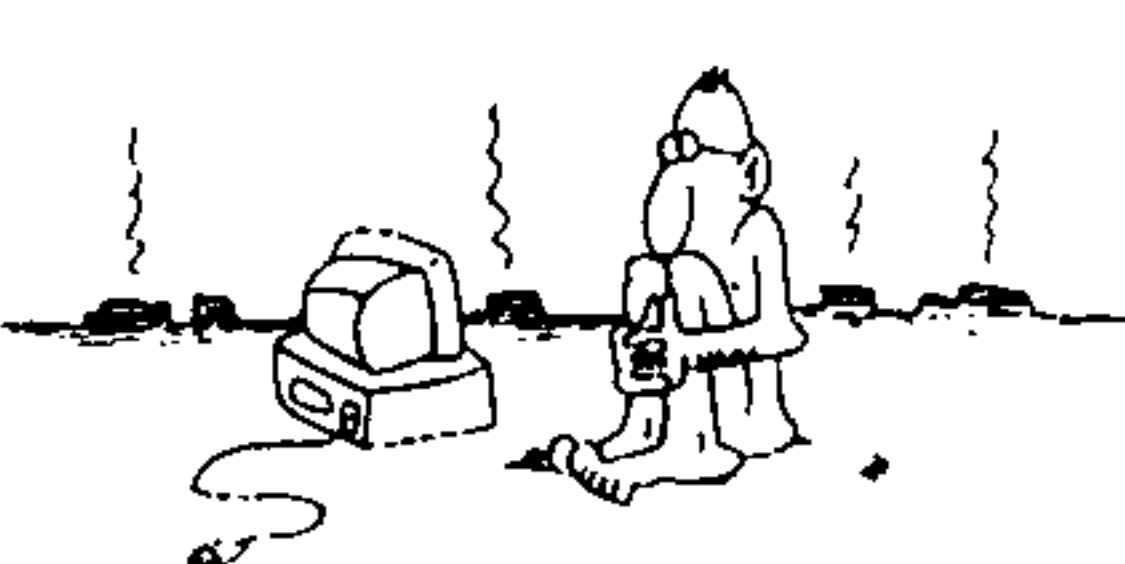
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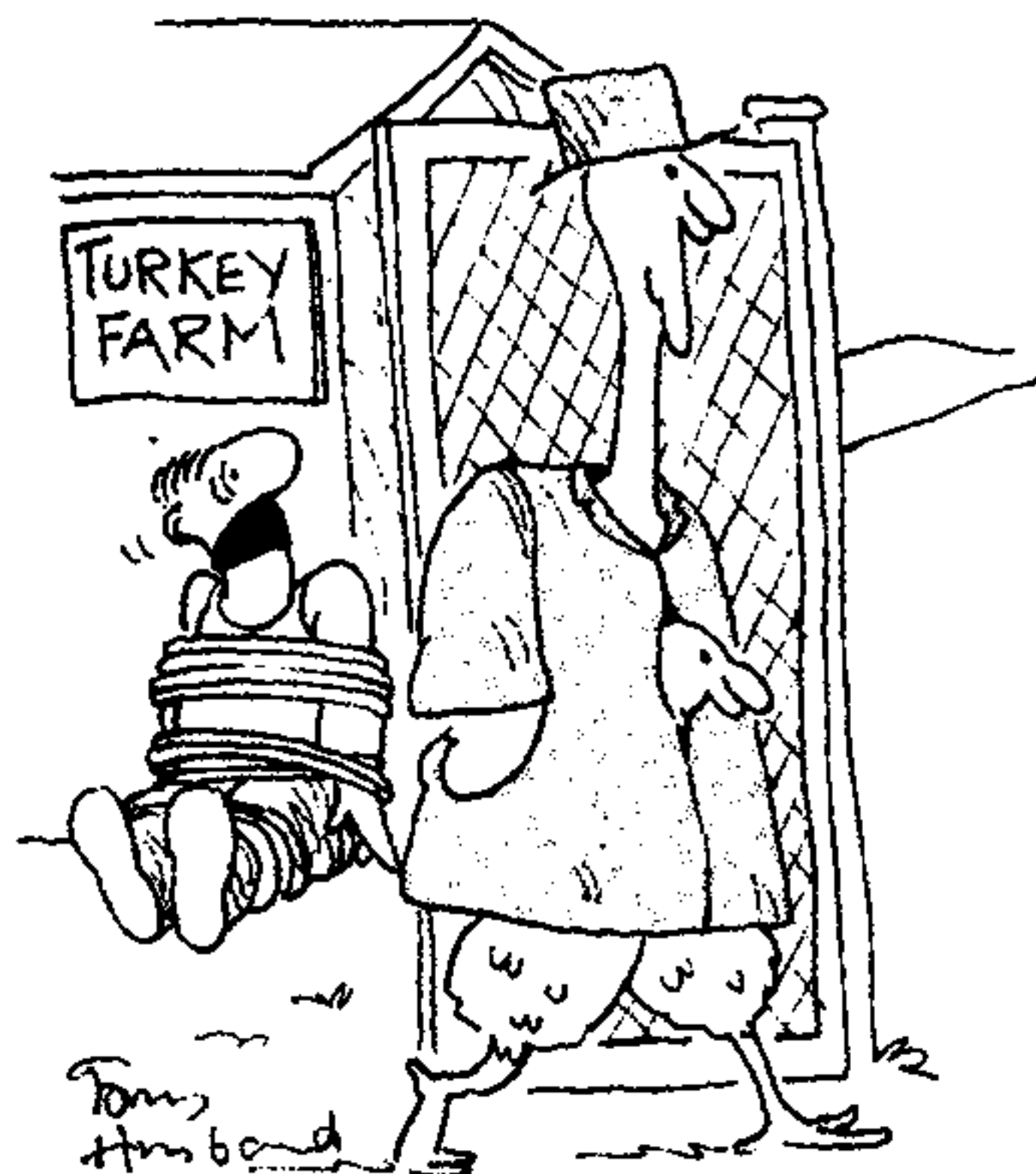
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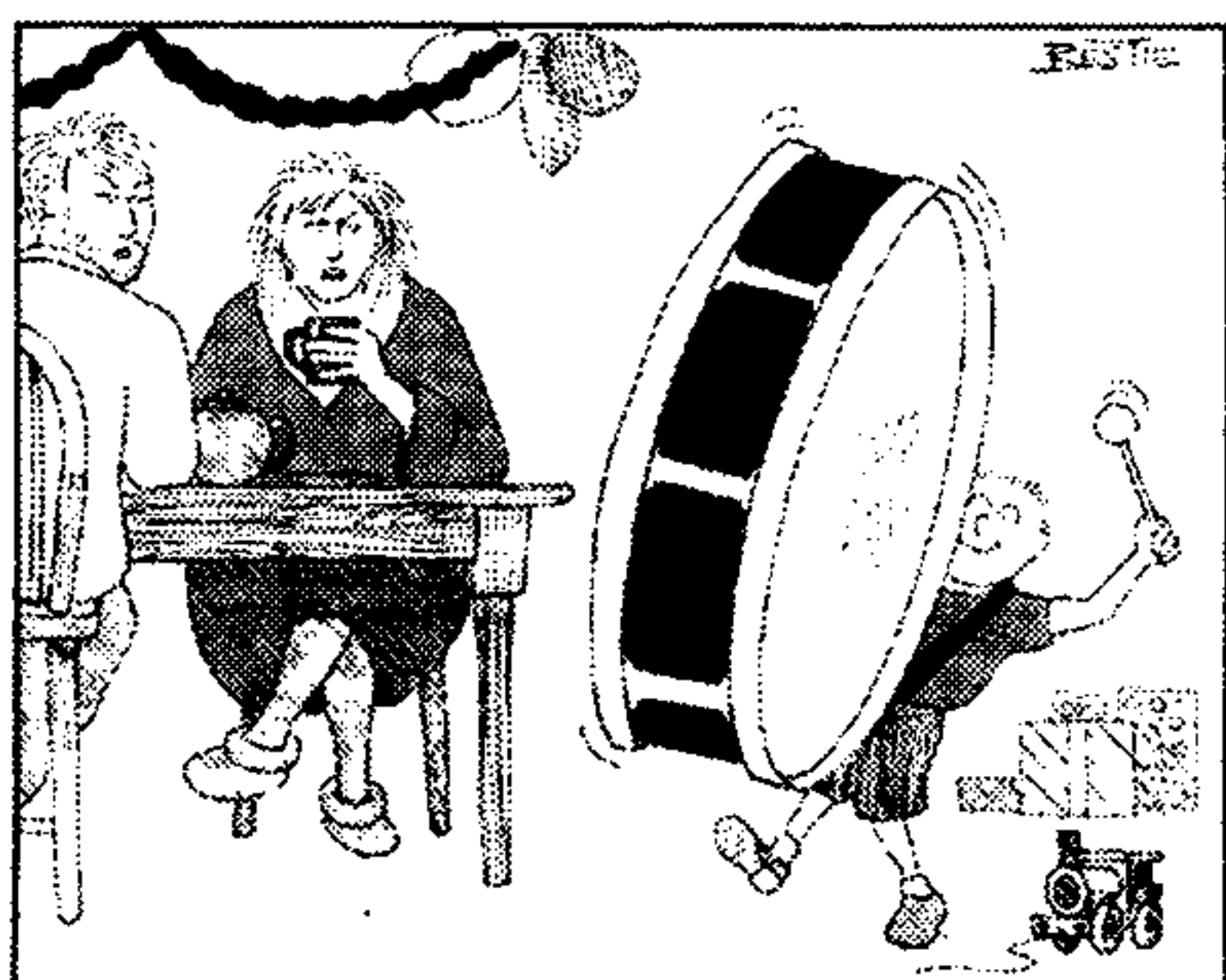
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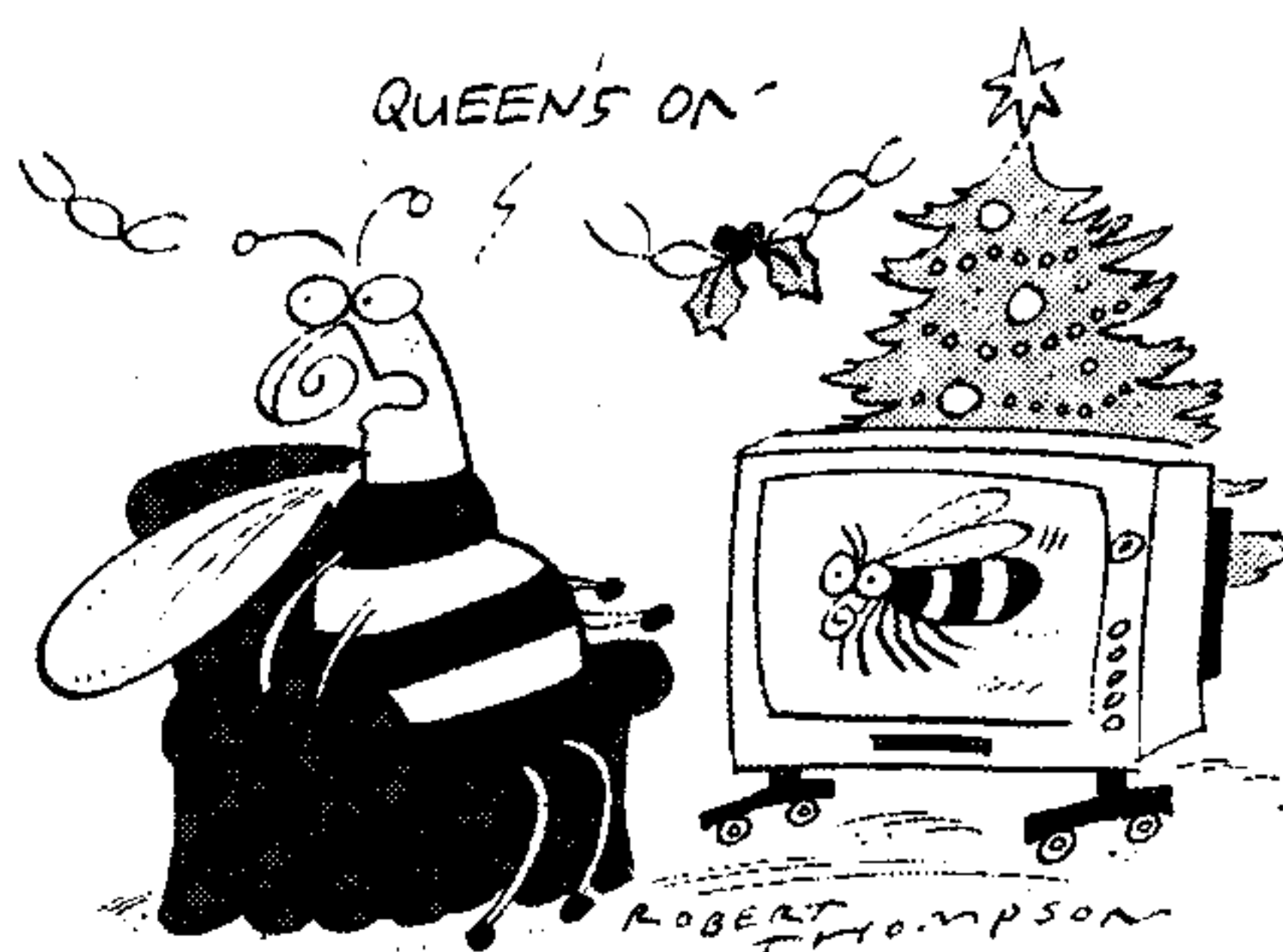


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